

Fitch I

Fitch's England to Pennsylvania

FITCH BOOK 1

ENGLAND

Photos and stories from "Villages of England" by Muir

Old England Fitch genealogy

Maps of Essex, Braintree, etc. in England

Enlarged maps from J.T. Fitch book

More maps - Fitches lived there

Interesting list of names pertaining to old wills in Essex

Coat of Arms

William Fitch of Canfield, England, by J.T. Fitch

"Fitch" supplied by George Arthur Fitch of Elkhart, IN

Family group sheets from the Ancestral File

Ruined Church at the
deserted medieval village
of Wharram Percy in
Yorkshire.







The guildhall at the fossilized medieval town at Thaxted, Essex, was built for the local guild of cutlers.

Thaxted is not far
from Widdington

The village pond at Newton-on-Rawcliffe, Yorkshire (right), may, like the village, be a Norman creation.



THAXTED

Essex

7 MILES (11 KM) SOUTH-EAST OF SAFFRON WALDEN



Not only can Thaxted claim the most glorious church in Essex, it also boasts a most magnificent ancient guildhall. And, as if that were not enough, it has an uncommon wealth of other historic buildings. In the Middle Ages Thaxted became an important centre for the cutlery trade. There is no iron in the vicinity so it may have been that knives and swords were brought here for finishing. The guildhall, built by the cutlers in about 1400, stands at the centre of the village, a proud three-storey building, each floor overhanging the one below. All around it are more 15th-century timber-framed and overhanging buildings, some with pargeting. Other

houses were medieval in origin and have Georgian plasterwork façades; a number date wholly from the Georgian period, by which time the cutlery trade had declined and Thaxted was a more modest market centre. All blend together most harmoniously. From the guildhall a narrow lane leads up to the church. Its spire soars over the buildings below in proclamation of the wealth of its medieval builders, the cutlers and the lords of the manor, the de Clares. There are some beautiful details externally, while the inside is light and airy. Near the church is a double row of almshouses, one thatched, with a view between them of Thaxted's disused tower windmill.

Gustav Holst, the composer, lived next to the Recorder's house in Town Street from 1917 to 1925, working mainly on comic operas and choral pieces.

The cutlers' guildhall with the church beyond







FINCHINGFIELD

Essex

8 MILES (13KM) NORTH-WEST OF BRAINTREE



The pond, the old brick bridge over the stream, the green with the church and a haphazard collection of cottages behind have somehow come together here to make a charming vignette, often featured on calendars. The attraction of this village lies in the delightfully unplanned manner in which the houses of differing sizes, styles and ages jostle together. Many have tiled roofs, some gabled, some with dormers, and many are plastered and colour-washed. Above the green, Finchingfield House has five barge-boarded gables, while the 18th-century coaching inn, The Fox, is targeted. There is the red-brick Victorian school and the white Congregational

chapel. The 17th-century house with four-stack chimneys by the foot-bridge was once the village workhouse and the timber-framed, white-gabled almshouses by the church, built in 1500 as the school, were later the guildhall. A passage leads through them to the church, standing up on the hill. Much of it is Norman, including the square west tower. The cupola replaces a spire which fell during a storm in 1702. Inside, look for the squares used in the medieval game of Nine Men's Morris, scratched on the south aisle window ledge. On the northern edge of the village is a white postmill and, near by, an unusual hexagonal thatched cottage stands.

One of the monuments inside the church is to William Kempe of nearby Spains Hall (d.1628) who, doing penance for falsely accusing his wife of infidelity, did not speak for seven years. For each year of his silence, it is said, he dug a pond in the grounds of his house.

The church towers over the jumble of rooftops





*A picturesque row of cottages
beneath the castle mound*

PLESHEY

Essex

6 MILES (9.5 KM) NORTH-WEST OF CHELMSFORD

The whole of Pleshey village stands most evocatively within the earthworks of an important castle built in the 12th century by the Norman Geoffrey de Mandeville. Approach the village from the east, cross the outer bailey and the lane becomes the village high street. The vast, flat-topped mound can take one by surprise, rising up suddenly and dramatically behind the cottages, 60ft (18m) high and 300ft (91m) across at its base. The castle that stood on top was home for over 200 years to successive Lords High Constable of England before coming to Richard II's uncle, Thomas Duke of Gloucester. Gloucester founded a college of

priests here in 1393 and the crossing arches of the building (but nothing else) are still to be seen within the church, extensively rebuilt in 1868. The only building preserved from the castle is the 15th-century brick bridge linking the mound with the inner bailey. It is said that, in 1558, when Queen Elizabeth's Commissioners discovered that the villagers were keeping rabbits in the castle ruins and this was their only means of access over the moat, they allowed it to remain. Walk across it on to the mound for wide-stretching views over the trees and attractive houses of the village to the farmlands of Essex.



Cottages built for Georgian and Victorian farm workers. Above: brick construction at Avebury Trusloe, in Wiltshire.

Below: re-thatching work at Great Sampford, Essex.



for wattle and daub in the panels of timber-framed dwellings. Later it was a substitute for stone and formed the lintels and quoins of flint-walled houses. Though at first a luxury material, brick became the leading vernacular building material in the English Midlands and the Vale of York, its realm being divided by the great Dorset to Northamptonshire limestone belt, where stone maintained its sway. The early industries were localized and small in scale, with the first brick villages growing in places with good clays and the fuel supplies needed to fire the kilns. Differences in clay and technique resulted in numerous vernacular styles and contrasts, like the bright-red brickwork and pantiles of villages in the Newark area or the thick, burnt-chocolate bricks of the Trent valley villages. Brick and tile



making usually went together, but roofing tiles were often adopted to replace thatch in places like parts of Lincolnshire and the North York Moors where stone still reigned as a walling material.

Some places were bereft of building materials or the resources to buy them. Yet such localities could always turn to cob, with broad walls being built up in deep layers of compacted earth or clay, which could be seasoned and strengthened with some chalk if any was to hand. Limewash was needed to protect such walls. Some cob villages can still be enjoyed in Devon and Somerset, but the cob legacy in Wessex is much reduced and has virtually disappeared from the south of Leicestershire. Another resort of the impoverished homemaker was clay lump. While cob was built up in situ, clay lump consisted of a mixture of clay and straw shaped into large building blocks. These were laid on a plinth of tarred brick, bonded together with mud and then plastered to keep out the damp.

Mass production and mass transport spelled doom for the vernacular tradition in village architecture. Cheap imported softwoods brought commercial decline to the ancient oak woodlands. Slates produced in their millions at great quarry sites in the west offered roofs which would last a century but would not burn. Standardized bricks from the vast brickworks were more competitive than attractive – but they ousted the local products, closed many a quarry and made wattle and daub a thing of legend. There was no great shift in philosophy to ignite the change – villagers had always sought to build as much as they could for as little as possible. Factory, railway, canal and turnpike allowed them to build a little more for a little less, and it was only the village scenery that suffered.

Agricultural cottages at Winfrith, in Dorset, are of humbler materials: local earth and straw.

DEDHAM

Essex

6 MILES (9.5 KM) NORTH OF COLCHESTER

This part of Essex, it has been said, is 'pure Constable country: Nature with – as he loved it – the dew still upon her in undisturbed simplicity'. And what makes Dedham so special is that what Constable saw and painted in the first half of the 19th century is still what we see today. We can walk the lanes around Dedham, stand exactly where Constable stood, and see living paintings, unbroken links between nature and art. Dedham's fulling mill, featured in Constable's most famous painting of the village, was the key to its prosperity in the 16th century and its main street, lined with fine houses and some delightful old shop-fronts, is a reflection of the

wealth derived from the cloth-making trade. To explore it is richly rewarding. The splendid 16th-century church is notable for its carving, particularly in the passage through the tower which features in several of Constable's paintings. Opposite is the Marlborough Head, a timber-framed corner house built in the 1430s as a cloth-merchant's house and later used by a dyer who stored his woad vats in the cellar. It became an inn in 1702. Other links with the cloth trade include Sherman's Hall, which was built as the home of a clothier and had its Classical brick façade added in the 1730s. Near the church is the old grammar school that Constable once attended.

Sherman's Hall, built for an ancestor of the American Civil War's General Sherman



Master Forger

In the north-west corner of the churchyard is buried Tom Keating, whose claim to fame – or perhaps infamy – was his ability to produce a 'Constable' at the drop of a hat. He pulled the wool over many an art critic's eye, until his forgery was exposed in the 1980s.



Old fishermen's cottages in Quay Street, which in Tudor times was under the sea

ORFORD

Suffolk

9 MILES (14.5 KM) EAST OF WOODBRIDGE

Musical Premières

Several of Benjamin Britten's works had their first performances in the broad, lofty nave of Orford Church, notably *Noye's Fludde* (1958), based on the Chester miracle play and intended by the composer for performance in church with the audience participating in traditional hymns; and three one-act Church Parables, *Curlew River* (1964), *The Burning Fiery Furnace* (1968) and *The Prodigal Son* (1968).

Glance at a map or, better, look east from the top of the castle keep. Between Orford and the sea lie first the River Ore and then the 10-mile-long (16km) shingle bank of Orford Ness. This began to build up in the 16th century, gradually silting up the river and rendering the harbour useless for trade. Hence Orford's decline from a busy medieval port trading in wool with access to the open sea – and three churches, two hospitals and a friary – to today's pleasant and peaceful village of brick and timber-framing with a riverside quay popular with pleasure craft. Its castle keep, however, has stood oblivious to the vagaries of the Suffolk coast, since

Henry II had it built in 1165–7. There are two significant things about the castle (English Heritage). It was the first to be built with a keep that was cylindrical internally and 18-sided externally, the polygonal shape making it stronger and more easily defended than a square or rectangular one. Secondly, the financial records of the King's Exchequer, the Pipe Rolls, exist, meaning that this is the oldest castle for which there is documentary evidence. The ruined chancel of the village church is of similar date, the nave and tower being 14th-century. Especially attractive are the old market square and the street that leads down to the quay.

The Swan Inn used to be a favourite of the American airmen of the 487th Bomb Group who were based in the area during World War II. It has a collection of wartime memorabilia and in one bar preserves a section of wall that is covered with the airmen's signatures.

Timber-frame construction in East Anglia is different from that of other areas in that many more vertical timbers are used than horizontal. The verticals are therefore placed quite close together, producing a totally different effect from the square chequerboard frontages seen in Cheshire or the Midlands. Notable by their absence in East Anglia are cruck and jointed-cruck trusses, used in every area of the country except the eastern counties



Little Hall, home of the Suffolk Preservation Society and the Gayer-Anderson Collection of paintings, ceramics and furniture

LAVENHAM

Suffolk

6 MILES (9.5 KM) NORTH-EAST OF SUDBURY

This is the most famous, the most glorious, of all Suffolk's famous and glorious wool villages. In 1326 Edward III banned the import of foreign cloth, giving a boost to home industry and encouraging the immigration into East Anglia of Flemish weavers with whom there were already trading connections.

Through the 14th and 15th centuries Lavenham developed and prospered, rebuilding itself in appropriately wealthy style. After about 1600, however, little new building took place as Lavenham, along with other wool towns, began to decline. With the development of water-power for the fulling process, the weaving industry

began to shift towards the hill streams of the west and north of England, and with the invention of the power loom dependent on water and then coal, weaving in East Anglia was finished. Lavenham reverted to agriculture and never became industrialised. The magnificent timbered cloth-halls, the fine cloth-merchants' houses, the beautiful guildhall, the quite splendid church, even the weavers' cottages have more or less all remained intact. Somehow, it is as though time has stood still for those medieval weavers and dyers and fullers.

To walk about Lavenham is to breathe its medieval perfection through every pore. Sailing above the village and the undulating countryside that nourished it is the great knapped flint church tower. This is a most spectacular church, built on the combined funds of a rich clothier, Thomas Spring, and the de Veres, Earls of Oxford. The interior is elaborate; of its finer detailing note, if nothing else, the charming carvings

on the misericords (the pelican, especially) and the amazingly elaborate Spring family pew. They and their fellow cloth-merchants would have operated from the early 16th-century guildhall. Look closely at the exceptional quality of the decoration of its timbering and it is clear that Lavenham was no run-of-the-mill place. Notice particularly the carved corner posts of the porch. Also in the market place is Little Hall, another beautiful half-timbered building of the 14th century, the 500-year-old Angel Hotel and some Georgian remodelled frontages. The market cross has stood since 1501. The Swan Hotel now incorporates the old wool hall, another superb timbered building. But there are superb timbered buildings in every street, round every corner. Gables lean in or out, jetties slope up or down, roofs dip and rise. Suddenly a little carved head peeks out from under an eave. It has watched countless generations go by. It has always been there, one feels, and it surely always will be.

The 16th-century guildhall



Pargeting, the art of raised (or occasionally incised) decorative plasterwork, is quite commonly seen on façades and gables of timber-framed houses in the towns and larger villages of Suffolk, Essex and Hertfordshire. The technique, developed in the 16th and 17th centuries, was to *pour jeter* (throw) plaster over the timber-framing. Patterns were then applied by pressing moulds into it while it was still wet. Earlier examples usually depict plants, animals or people, while later designs tend to be more geometric.

The Ancient House, a former priest's house next to the church, is dated 1473 – its pargeting would have been added much later

CLARE

Suffolk

7 MILES (11 KM) WEST OF SUDBURY

In the streets at the centre of this substantial village are many beautiful old houses, cottages and shops, some dating back to the 15th century. A number are exquisite examples of the local art of pargeting, their frontages bringing to mind delicately embroidered linen or an intricately iced cake. Like so many villages in this part of the country, Clare is a legacy of the enormous prosperity that came from the woollen cloth trade in the Middle Ages. Its origins, however, are in its Iron Age hillfort, near the church. Later, the Norman de Clare family, recognising its commanding position over the Stour valley, built a motte and bailey

here which was to become the centre of the powerful empire known as the Honour of Clare. In 1248 Gilbert de Clare built an Augustinian priory on the banks of the river, the first of that order in England. It was dissolved in 1538, but in 1954 the monks returned and Clare is an Augustinian priory once more. The big flint church above the market place of this substantial village dates in part from the 13th century. Its medieval stained glass was mostly smashed in 1643 by the Puritan William Dowsing who went about East Anglia destroying 'pictures superstitious'. He left the heraldic pieces; he had no problems, presumably, with heraldry.







5 Life in the medieval village

The medieval villager is a rather shadowy figure. Being illiterate, he or she could not record hopes, fears, convictions and beliefs. Since the villager was humble and servile, nobody else considered his or her feelings or way of life to be worthy of note. Instead, we encounter the villagers indirectly, via terse entries in the rolls of medieval manors, where they appear as the subjects of fines and as the owners of obligations. Historical documents are unable on their own to show the village peasant as a colourful, three-dimensional individual, but archaeology has recently been able to tell us a great deal about medieval village homes, while the excavation of churchyards reveals information about the ailments which afflicted the old communities.

The medieval records reveal villagers as people bowed down by work and exploited at every turn. Their only contact with learning and spiritual affairs came via a church which seems to have done its best to fill them with guilt and foreboding. Perhaps they really were wretched and down-trodden people. And perhaps this grim perception is severely flawed.

In the course of the last two or three decades archaeology has answered many questions about the medieval village home. Some of the dwellings have long since crumbled into the dust, but in other places their footings can be seen quite plainly in the turf at deserted village sites. Excavations can provide precise answers about the floor area of a house, its internal divisions and the positions of things like hearths and ovens, though it is usually less forthcoming on features which existed above ground level. The height of walls, the method of roof construction and the materials used for thatching can remain debatable. The choice of building materials varied from place to place

Gathering grapes: a scene from one of the capitals of Wells Cathedral, reminding us that there were once vineyards in England.

and from time to time, while towards the end of the Middle Ages some of the more affluent villagers were able to aspire to houses which, though barely habitable by modern standards, were much better than any occupied before. In general it is safe to characterize the village home as being small, bereft of amenities and quite likely to collapse within the lifetime of its residents and its builder.

Most peasants were farmers or smallholders as well as farm labourers, so their houses, in a sense, were farmsteads. Often the milk cows or ewes commanded as much space in the home as their owners. There was never a standard English peasant house in the Middle Ages, but the most commonly found kind was a 'long-house'. Small, long and narrow and lacking an upper storey – or indeed windows in most cases – the long-house generally consisted of two rooms divided by a short passage which ran from the door at the front to the one at the back of the house. One room was for livestock, whose body heat must have helped to warm the dwelling, and the other one was a living and sleeping room for the whole family. Sanitary arrangements were not poor, they simply did not exist, and while peat may have smouldered in a hearth at the centre of the room, much cooking was probably done outside. Chimneys were also lacking, so that smoke swirled among the rafters until it filtered through the thatch or escaped through a smoke hole at the top of the gable.

At Wharham Percy in Yorkshire almost all the village dwellings were long-houses, rectangular in shape and ranging from 49 feet (15 metres) to 75 feet (23 metres) long. Their width was often less than a third of their length. Here the excavations revealed a change in the choice of building materials, for while homes continued to be thatched, in the early part of the thirteenth century the use of timber-framing was abandoned in favour of building walls of locally quarried chalk blocks, bonded together by clay rather than mortar. Then, around 1500, the fashion for timber-framing returned, but this time the houses were built on footings of stone.

Peasant dwellings of the long-house type seem to have appeared in England around the end of the twelfth century and became very widespread in the thirteenth century. More sophisticated and solid versions remained in use until well after the close of the Middle Ages – and in remote parts of France a few were still occupied by people, sheep and cattle in the middle of the present century. However, in some medieval villages, such as Gomeldon in Wiltshire, there was a transition from the long-house to the farm house. In the twelfth century a crude long-house was built, its roof supported by curving branches joined at their tips to form a 'cruck frame', with its oven

being placed in an adjoining outhouse. In the thirteenth century two larger long-houses were built close to the site of the former house, but later in the century one became a byre and the other a farm house. A farmyard was set out in front of the farm house and a large barn was built on another side of the yard. In this way there was an evolution to the 'courtyard farm', consisting of farm buildings set around a yard.

Not all medieval village homesteads were long-houses. There were two- and even three-roomed dwellings in which none of the living space was allocated to animals. At the Weald and Downland Museum at Singleton in West Sussex there is a full-scale reconstruction of a flint-walled homestead based on excavations at the deserted Sussex village of Hangleton. Here building in flint nodules replaced the use of timber around the middle of the thirteenth century. The reconstructed house has a larger and a smaller room and, with its low flint walls crowned by a great hipped roof of thatch, it provides a dramatic evocation of the medieval village scene.

During the thirteenth century rebuilding works converted scores of English villages composed of rather rickety timber shacks into villages of stone houses. These improvements certainly made the homes a little more durable, even though their walls seldom stood more than shoulder high and the roofs of poles and thatch which they bore may have been prone to collapse. One of the most rewarding deserted medieval village sites lies in the shadow of the great rocks at Hound Tor on Dartmoor, where an excavation has exposed the footings of the dwellings. Saxons had put their sunken huts here and the houses built in the early part of the twelfth century were still small and rectangular, no more than 13 feet (4 metres) in length. The walls were made firstly by erecting a wattle fence marking the inner house dimensions and secondly by building up turf blocks against the fence. Consisting of little more than twigs and soil, these dwellings had a short life and needed to be rebuilt several times. Around 1200 there was a change to building in stone, with granite rubble being gathered from the fields and moor and used to replace the insubstantial former walls.

As the Middle Ages drew towards a close, at least some members of the village community enjoyed distinct improvements to their homes. Open hearths and smoke holes were superseded by chimneys, and lofts reached by ladders sometimes became upper storeys. Windows were made and some were even glazed. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries lords, merchants and the most prosperous of the yeomen were able to aspire to village houses so substantial that parts of them survive to this day. For most villagers, however, the



Above: a reconstruction of a medieval house from the village of Hangleton, deserted in the fourteenth century.

Right: a reconstructed medieval house interior at the Weald and Downland Museum in West Sussex, showing the earthen floor, open hearth and minimal furniture.



living conditions remained poor. This is not to say that the peasant families enjoyed living in filth. Floors of packed earth were strewn with rushes and there is some evidence that housewives worked hard with the besom to clean their floors as best they could. Even so, the village house may have been more of a shelter than a home and much domestic life was probably enacted outside its narrow portals, away

from the gloom, the stench of the byre and the choking smoke from the hearth. In the nearby manor house the lord probably owned a chair, a long table and benches for his guests and a chest as well. The poky homes of his tenants might have been completely unfurnished, apart from a sack of straw for a bed, a stool and a cot.

Most of what we know about medieval villagers has been gleaned from contemporary manorial documents which record their obligations and misdemeanours. It is not possible to describe a typical village family with any accuracy. However, we can invent a household and make its members as representative of the villagers of the thirteenth century as we can.

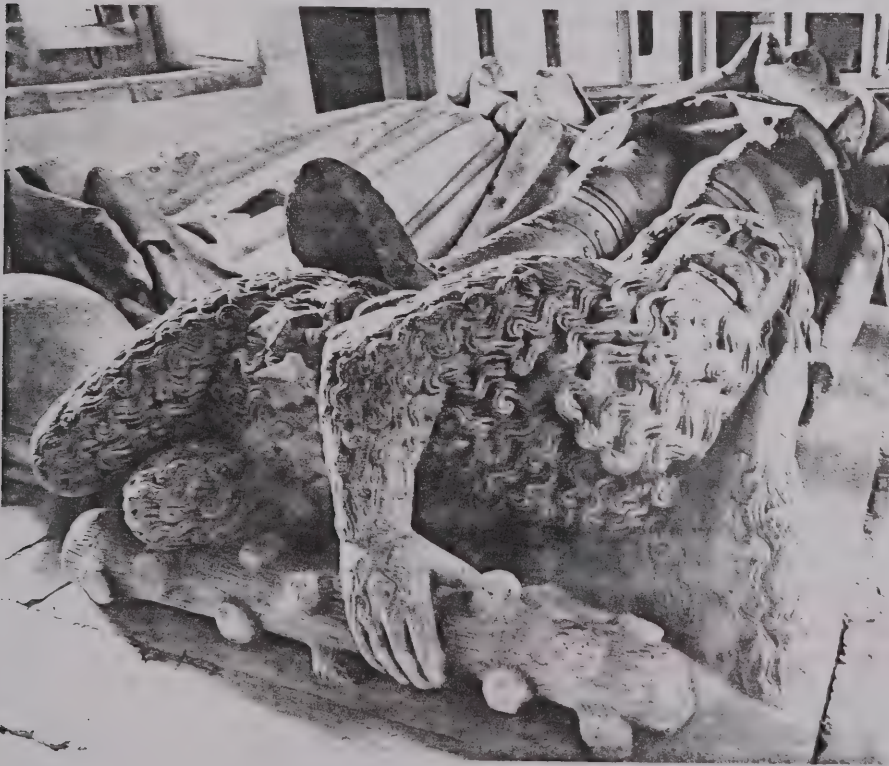
The scene is set in a village of the Midland counties. Robert and Alice ate Mere are resting in their garden plot, down wind of the rows of peas and beans and up wind of their pigsty. Their family name reflects the fact that one of Robert's forbears lived beside either a mere or a boundary. Surnames are still flexible and Robert's descendants may adopt ones that are different. It is Sunday and soon the tolling will summon them back to the huge stone palace which towers over the village shanties like a great ocean liner moored amongst a fleet of fishing smacks. They always like to approach the church from the east, for old traditions no less hallowed than the Christian creed warn that it is unlucky to move against the course of the sun or 'withershins'. You can only face the Devil by turning from west to east. As they walk towards the boulder-strewn swamp that is the village street their shoulders brush the thatch of their home, triggering a flurry of scuffling from the rats in the rafters. Also from within comes a gentle lowing from the family milk cow. By far their most valuable possession, it will certainly be seized by the lord on the day that Robert dies.

Although they were raised in the same village, Robert and Alice were never childhood sweethearts. Robert was already doing a man's work on his father's holding by the time that Alice was born. Robert had several flirtations – but Walter ate Mere would not countenance marriage until he felt ready to pass on his holding. Walter chose the bride. The qualities he sought in his daughter-in-law were the ability to work as hard as some men and the evidence of good breeding stock. A go-between was despatched and Henry Townsend, like any peasant with a good ewe or sow to sell, made the best deal that he could for his daughter. The dowry and the dower of land to be settled on Alice when her husband died were agreed and Henry went to survey the ate Mere holding. A hand fasting, or troth plighting, ceremony was followed by an open-air feast and thus, in the eyes of

the village, Robert and Alice became man and wife. A few weeks later a more formal marriage service was performed at the door of the church.

Walter moved into a cottage hastily erected at the end of the garden and surrendered his holding at the manor court or 'hallmote.' Robert paid a stiff entry fine for the right to take over the tenancy, but the fathers were pleased that a marriage had been made within the manor. Otherwise there would have been much heavier fines to pay.

Alice is still in her mid-twenties, yet already she has given birth to five children. One died at birth and another in infancy. If the three surviving sons all reach maturity, then Robert will face a difficult choice, for only one of them, not necessarily the oldest, may inherit the holding. The two unfortunate sons may inherit money, if there is any, and may seek employment elsewhere, perhaps as mercenaries, quarrymen or tanners. With the greatest of luck one might secure a vacant holding on this or another manor, while almost unimaginable good fortune would involve marriage to a free heiress. Through such a marriage the serf himself could be made free – though the children might still be regarded as serfs. Alternatively, the sons might stay at home to help their more fortunate brother. But if they did so they



In the medieval village old pagan beliefs mixed with Christian sentiments. As late as 1471 the fertility symbol of a green man or man o' the woods was included as a footrest on the tomb of Sir Robert Whittington and his wife at Aldbury church in the Chilterns.

could never marry. A marriage required not only a bride but also a holding of land.

The tyranny of land over life was an all-pervading feature of the medieval village community. It remains so in some of the more sheltered Irish societies, while the old English values were exported to North America. There folk songs recalling the old habits survived in the Appalachian mountains long after they had been forgotten in the shires which gave them birth. The ballad of Lord Thomas is an example:

Father, come father, come riddle to me,
Come riddle it all in one,
And tell me whether to marry Fair Ellen
Or bring the Brown girl home?

The Brown girl she has house and land,
Fair Ellender she has none,
And there I charge you with the blessing
To bring the Brown girl home.

In the same way the haunting Irish ballad, 'Bunclody', tells of an age-old sadness enduring almost to this day:

'Tis why my love left me, you might understand
For she has a freehold and I have no land
She has great store of riches in silver and gold
And everything fitting a house to uphold

If I were a clerk and could write a fine hand
I would write my love a letter and she might understand
But I am a poor fellow who is wounded in love
Once I lived in Bunclody but now must remove

So fare thee well father, my mother adieu
My sisters and brothers farewell unto you
I am bound for America my fortune to try
When I think of Bunclody I am ready to die.

Robert ate Mere is a **villein**. He does not like to be called such, but a villein he is. After the Norman Conquest lawyers tried to superimpose simple principles of Roman law on the complex societies of Saxon England and decided that men were either free or else serfs or villeins. Robert is certainly not free, but neither is he a slave. On the one hand, he technically owns nothing – all his goods belong to the lord of the manor, who could also sell Robert if he so wished. On the other hand, his position is protected by a great body of revered manorial custom. He is best regarded as a tenant burdened with

massive obligations to provide labour and lacking any right of appeal outside or beyond the manor court.

The villeins are the powerhouse of village farming. They are more than a class and might be regarded as an estate. Often a man's identity is subsumed into this estate. If certain works are performed poorly, then a fine may be imposed on the whole of the villein workforce. At the same time the villeins as a body take many of the important decisions about farming the manor and form a jury at the manor court to sit in judgment on their fellows. Exploited, oppressed and sometimes starving, they, more than any other group, are the backbone of the realm.

Villeins behave in an obedient, even servile manner so long as they believe that the burdens imposed upon them are in accord with the ancient customs of the manor. But once they think that these hallowed traditions are being abused and flouted, they become angry and intransigent. In 1291, for example, the Abbot of Ramsey's villeins at Broughton near Huntingdon walked out of the harvest field at noon because they believed that the loaves provided for their lunchtime meal were smaller than those offered in previous years. The harvest was badly damaged and the villeins as a body were fined some 40s (about £2 today), but they had made their point.

Robert's holding consists of about thirty plough strips scattered throughout the great fields of the village. He also has a share in the brookside meadows and rights to pasture a number of beasts on the common. In return for his holding he is obliged to work on his lord's demesne on two days a week and to perform a number of 'boon works'. Notionally he does these out of the kindness of his heart, but in reality he has no choice in the matter. The only difference of substance between the boon work and the day-to-day drudgery is that on the former occasions the lord provides a lunch or dinner. Most of the servile work is similar to that which Robert performs on his own land – ploughing, sowing, harvesting, hay-making and so on – but as one of the most respected villeins, he occasionally attracts more unusual duties. In August he takes the lord's cart to the coast to buy salted herrings for the villagers who are all engaged in boon works in the harvest fields. This task takes him away from the village for five days – at a time when he feels desperate to secure his own harvest. Nevertheless, it gives him a wonderful opportunity to catch up with the affairs of the nation, to converse with peasants speaking in the strange accents of other counties and to glimpse the fantastic building works being undertaken at church, cathedral and castle sites along the way. Every scene and snippet of gossip is absorbed into his memory, for he knows that on his return he will face relentless

Medieval lords were generally hard and masterful – as expressed in the tomb effigy of one of the Marmion dynasty at West Tanfield, near Ripon.



quizzing from the other villagers when they take their harvest dinner in the lord's house.

At **Christmas Robert gives his lord a hen**. This is a payment made for the right to gather firewood in the lord's wood. Robert is careful to select the bird which lays the fewest eggs and looks most ready to meet its maker. He also makes a gift of ale – but then the villagers go to the hall and have a Christmas dinner comprising most of what they have just given. Robert is also the subject of more serious obligations. When he dies, his best beast will be taken as a heriot by the lord and the second best will be commandeered by the church – the same church that regularly takes a tithe (one tenth) of every item of value which the family produces. These fines or taxes, along with those for 'entering' or inheriting his holding, make it very hard for the family to prosper from the fruits of their toil.

It is less easy to itemize all the work that Alice performs; Robert is the head of the household and they are his duties and failings which are listed in the manor rolls. However, the medieval village is not

such a male-dominated world as one might imagine. Women can hold and sublet land and careful provisions are made for widows, some of whom work holdings with their own or hired labour after the death of their husbands. Alice is more than a mother and a housewife. She looks after the family poultry and she also attends to urgent jobs on the holding on the many days when Robert is conscripted for work on the lord's demesne. Then, along with all the able-bodied adults and children, she becomes part of the throng engaged in boon works at harvest and haytime.

Villeins are not the only community within the village. The free tenants also form a coherent group, one which is no less forthright in its determination to preserve its ancient rights and status. Because freedom can be enjoyed in a variety of different and complicated ways – some are generally regarded as being free, while others tenant land which has a free status attached to it – disputes are frequent. They certainly cannot be resolved by reference to factors like material wealth, for it is perfectly possible to be both free and yet poorer than any family of villeins on the manor. On the whole, villagers are free if the other free families in the village accept them into their ranks. It is also generally the case that the obligations of work service associated with free tenure soon become replaced by money rents. This makes it easier for the ambitious free family to rise in the world, for any money remaining after the payment of rents and tithes can be invested to expand the holding. Though free of obligations to provide manual labour, the freemen or franklins often ride on errands for the lord and can serve as supervisors at times when the village labour force is assembled together at harvest. The medieval village is packed with thrusting individualists determined to better their lot.

When the villein feels the need to look down upon someone, as doubtless he sometimes does, he can always cast a superior glance at the cottars. The structure of village society is complicated, but in descending order the classes are composed of freemen or franklins; husbonds or geneats or villeins; and cottars. The cottars have much smaller holdings than the villeins; their name refers to the fact that they live in the smallest of the village dwellings – the cots or cottages – rather than in the houses occupied by the husbonds, who are bondsmen with houses. Cottars are defined by the small size of their holdings rather than their class status. Some cottars are also free men. Having little land to work, the cottars have only a modest burden of services and survive by supplementing the produce of their holdings with wages earned by working for others. The lowest of the cottars are not tenants of the lord but subtenants of one of their village

neighbours, while even those cottars who do work on the demesne toil not alongside the villeins but as a separate body. Certain cottars serve as the lord's ploughman, shepherd and cowherd but they can never aspire to the high estate offices, which are always manned by villeins.

Not everybody in the village fits easily into one of these three classes. In Robert's village there are three 'anilepimen', landless farm labourers. Being landless, they are also single. One is the son of a villager who failed to receive an inheritance of land and the others drifted into the village in search of work. They are employed by some of the larger tenants. There is also a small but growing class of 'molmen', villeins who no longer serve in the field beside their fellow villeins, for they have reached an agreement with their lord and now pay cash rents for their holdings rather than performing work.

And then there are the **specialists**. The miller is called John Miller, a name which is not chosen by coincidence. Surnames are still rather fluid and most villagers are named after the place where they live, like Atwood or Townsend, after their trade, like **Smith** or **Turner**, or after their father, like **Jackson (son of Jack)**. The miller is one of the most prosperous franklins and pays a very heavy rent for the tenancy of the lord's watermill, which he must also maintain and repair. His income comes from the 'multure', a share of flour which he retains from his peasant clients as a charge for milling their grain. All the villagers believe that John Miller takes an unjustly large multure. Nobody in the village speaks well of the miller, yet there is not a father who would not be delighted to see his daughter marry him.

The blacksmith is a villein and a smallholder, the plot of land which he works always being the one allocated to the smith, so that whoever tenants it is either the village blacksmith or else responsible for appointing one. The standing of the smith in village society is rather peculiar, though there are few people left who still believe that smiths are workers of magic. He ploughs like a villein but also dines in the manor like one of the lord's household servants. In fact, he serves both communities, providing shares and coulter for the village ploughs and shoeing both the plough horses and the mounts of the lord. He bridges the gap between the communities of the village and the manor. The household of the manor includes servants or 'famuli' as well as agricultural workers, such as a ploughman, shepherd, swineherd and cowman who work on the manor farm. These agricultural workers are cottars who toil at their specialist occupations and have no other duties.

Then there is a small class of officials. The most important of these is the reeve, who serves the lord and village as a sort of general

foreman. He is invariably a villein of the more substantial and reliable kind and was elected by the village community whose members knew that they would all be fined should their choice prove a bad one. As he fills a most demanding office, the reeve is excused all other duties, invited to dine at the lord's table during harvest and allowed to pasture his horse on the demesne. He is responsible for the conduct of the farm work on the manor and also acts as a rent collector for the lord, witnesses wills and even has the power to sanction or prevent marriages by daughters who hope to wed outside the village.

Villagers of a lower standing serve the lord as woodward, hayward and beadle. The woodward guards the woods of the manor, making sure that the villagers take no more than their entitlement to fallen twigs for fuel and timber for repairing hedges and ploughs. The hayward is responsible for keeping horn and corn well apart and for ensuring that visitors from neighbouring parishes do not steal shocks of ripened grain around harvest time. The beadle helps the reeve to organize village husbandry and collect rents; he also serves as the officer of the manor court and collects fines. Doubtless his vocation makes him unpopular with his neighbours and his humble status makes him an even more likely target for derision than the miller.

There is another minor official who is also associated with fines levied by the lord of the manor, but his job is much more coveted than that of the beadle. This is the ale-taster, who samples all the brews fermented in the peasant households and offered for sale to ensure that they reach the standards set by the royal assize of ale. As there are many brewers and fines are frequently imposed, we can be sure that the ale-tasters perform their duties with a rare gusto.

Last, but certainly not least, there is the priest. Were the parish a notably rich one, then it would probably be served by a priest from an aristocratic background. Were it a poor one, then the priest will probably be an illiterate fellow who had risen from the ranks of the peasants. In this case, the parish suffers from having an absentee rector whose place is filled by Henry, a vicar who was born a villein and whose proud father paid the lord a hefty fine to allow the boy to take holy orders. Henry learned what he could about the services and ritual by serving as a chaplain and now he struggles with an office which is really more than he can master, stumbling through the Latin mass that the congregation do not understand. He lives in constant fear that a visitation by the bishop will expose his lack of learning. Henry is paid a wage by the affluent rector who claims the harvest of parish tithes, but it is not a living wage. He is both a vicar and a peasant farmer and relies heavily on the food he can raise by

farming the glebe land. His life involves a repetitive sequence of changes from being the tonsured and cowed representative of a mystical and unfathomable religion to toiling in the rain and cold to scratch a living from the land. When the babies of the village are christened, they are held in rough hands soiled by the same earth which gave them birth.

The village is riddled with class distinctions and it is never easy to breach the barriers of status. The whole fabric of society and survival depends upon people knowing their place in it and meeting their obligations. It would be easy to imagine that the village is a world of separate cells and has no all-embracing identity. But this does not seem to be the case. People talk about 'the blood of the village' and are always reluctant to see an outsider take up a vacant holding if there is a true-born villager available as a potential tenant. The manor court rolls also reveal what appears to be a paranoid fear of outsiders, for villagers are frequently being fined for harbouring strangers. Faced with a heavy burden of harvest work, a villein is easily tempted to hire and lodge one or two farm workers who are 'foreigners' from outside the village. Perhaps the harsh reaction of the manor court reflects fears that the feudal structures could collapse if men became free to come and go as they pleased. The village as a whole is always particularly anxious to prevent any of its members from bringing in stock belonging to outsiders, for the grazing resources of the common are limited and cannot be shared with foreign beasts.

The harsh realities of life were interspersed by various festivities in the village year. There is little evidence of the existence of communal village buildings at this time, although an intriguing snippet of information was recorded by Walter Map, an official in the court of Henry II, in his *Courtiers' Trifles*. Writing in 1182 of a time about a century earlier, he told how Edric Wild was returning from the hunt when he found a large building on the edge of the forest. Light streamed from the windows, but when he peered inside he saw noble ladies dancing – and all were phantoms. He said that this was a building 'such as the English have as drinking-houses, one in each parish called in English "ghildhus" '.

Not a great deal is known about the games and festivals of the thirteenth century, although by the end of the Middle Ages forms of Morris dancing and various boisterous, even dangerous, ball games existed. Some of the festivities enjoyed in the village must have been inherited from pagan times, particularly those associated with May time. On the eve of May Day, the young people of the village often

Bench ends at Altarnun church, Cornwall, give a lively picture of the more festive side of life in the later Middle Ages. The armed figure (upper right) is probably a sword-dancer rather than a warrior.



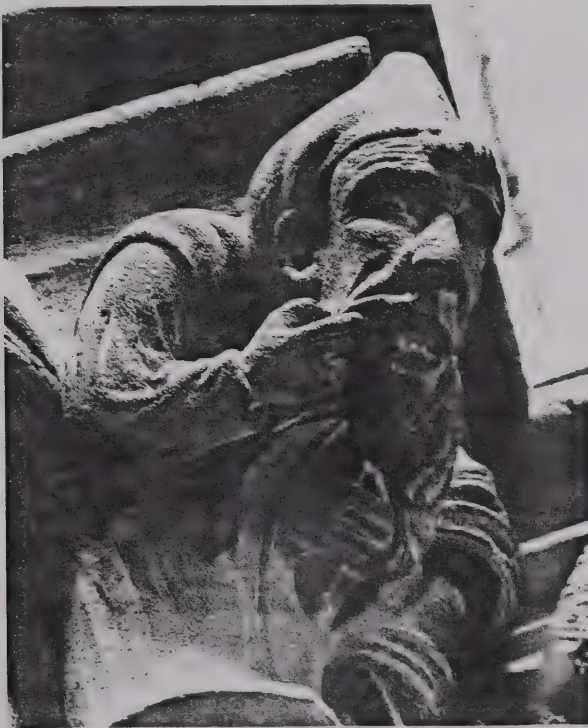
seem to have passed the night in the nearby fields, engaging in dalliance or rather more. Shortly afterwards there were the 'gangdays', when the bounds of the parish were beaten. The small boys of the village followed the cross and banners were buffeted against the boundary landmarks, the better to remember the extent of the communal territory. To underline the pagan nature of the rituals, at certain points which might be marked by 'holy' trees the procession would halt and the priest would extend a blessing over the emerging crops. Then there was the next great feast of the religious year, **Whitsuntide** (the other ones being **Christmas** and **Easter**). The Christian successor to the pagan midsummer ceremonies took place on the eve of the Nativity of St John the Baptist, **24 June**. Bonfires were lit, flaming brands were carried around the fields and at night in some places flaming wheels were sent rolling down the hillsides. The origins of these customs must have been long forgotten, but it was believed that the fires would drive away dragons, while the courses of the wheels symbolized the motions of the sun.

Then there were other celebrations which were peculiar to a certain parish or to a stage in the farming year. A wake was held on the eve of the day of the patron saint of the village church, when the members of the community, who were usually drowsy by dusk, were allowed to stay up late. On the following day, villagers who worshipped at daughter churches would process with their banners flying to the mother church – and this provided ample opportunities to engage in brawls with members of the 'home team'. When the village concerned was so favoured, the saint's day was normally also the day of the village fair. This was not only a time for commerce and games but also a day when visitors from neighbouring settlements were entertained and when departed members of the community would seek to return.

Harvest marked the end of the farming year. The cutting of the last sheaf and the leading home of the last load were celebrated by customs and rituals which varied from manor to manor, though the **harvest feast, with its music and dancing**, must have been universally enjoyed. All these milestones introduced an element of excitement into the perpetual cycle of reaping and sowing, ploughing and haytime. Even by the standards of the small village shows of today, the diversions on offer were rustic and humdrum, but for the peasants of the Middle Ages they answered that essential human need for something novel that would break the routine of day-to-day life.

The tedium of life could be broken in harsher ways, by sickness and by death. Some impressions of the realities of life in the medieval

village have come from that least glamorous branch of archaeological endeavour, the excavation of old cess pits. The work shows that the villagers were infested by a range of intestinal parasites. Digs in medieval graveyards reveal that toothache was a common and potentially fatal ailment and was probably such a widespread curse in the village because flour was contaminated by particles of grit which ground away the enamel of teeth. Another common affliction was osteoarthritis, the price of hard toil in wet and windswept fields. The village itself might have been designed to spread epidemics; there were no sewers and no piped water supplies. For the peasants there were no doctors, nothing but the care and concern of relatives and neighbours, so that a broken leg could result in death or a lifetime of infirmity. Drinking water was obtained from wells or springs, both sources being polluted by seepages from cess pits and middens. To survive, the medieval villagers must have had a far greater resistance to disease than most of us today. But when this resistance was undermined by famine, that other lurking curse of medieval life, then numerous villagers died.



Ailments like the toothache, easily remedied today, were in the Middle Ages a source of misery and even death. This figure is from another capital in Wells Cathedral.



6 The times of dying

The life of the village was the life of its people. The life of these people was sustained by the village lands, for without haytime and harvest there could be no life. Death was always a part of life in village England, but, from the time of King Alfred until the fourteenth century, the growth in the population of villages was hardly checked at all. In the Saxon centuries villages appeared and multiplied, and this era of creation and vitality continued through Norman and Plantagenet times. These new villages were not like the ancient villages, which were born and died within the passage of a few generations. They were places which would endure and persist unless particular misfortunes befell them. Had this period of multiplication continued, then the surface of England would have become covered in settlements, each one lacking the precious resources of land needed to support a population. In the event, the environment did launch a blind retaliation against the excesses of village growth, though the human failings of greed and violence played no less important roles in the culling of flocks.

Many people believe that lost village sites are rare and remarkable places. The small minority of cases which have been thoroughly explored by archaeologists have certainly yielded invaluable information, but really lost villages are a commonplace of the countryside. Few English readers of this book will be living more than five miles from the site of one such lost village or hamlet.

Even in times when the generosity of harvests pushed thoughts of famine from the minds of countryfolk, war was always a threat to the stability of village life. The details are not recorded, but in the Dark Ages when armies or war bands passed across the countryside,

Fountains Abbey was responsible for destroying a clutch of villages; a few intruded on the solitude of the monks, but the others were on sites earmarked for monastic farms.

villages and crops must have been burned quite frequently. Yet it would normally take much more than a serious fire to extinguish the life of a settlement. When word of the approaching host arrived, villagers would scurry to drive their stock into the havens of tangled woods or uncharted marshes. Later, they would emerge to assess the destruction and then begin to build anew in the place where the ashes of their lost abodes were still warm.

A far more systematic programme of destruction was undertaken by William the Conqueror in his Harrying of the North of 1069–71. This ‘scorched earth’ policy was not inflicted upon a hostile army so much as upon those of his subjects who were unfortunate enough to live in the rebellious north. Orderic Vitalis, who was born in 1075, when the memory of the slaughter was still fresh, described the Harrying as William’s most cruel act and he recounted how crops, herds and food of every kind were gathered together and burned. He believed that 100,000 men, women and children, all Christians of the north, had perished in the famine that followed.

Another chronicler, Symeon of Durham, wrote that: ‘Between York and Durham no village was inhabited’. He described a northern land which lay desolate for nine years, and certainly when Domesday Book was compiled in 1086 almost 45 per cent of the manors in Yorkshire were still wholly or partly wasted. But the countryside did not remain desolate for ever more. Swarms of new villages were created to repopulate the wasted estates and many were built to planned layouts with precisely measured dimensions. During the centuries that followed there may have been other villages which were exterminated in the course of warfare, but examples are not easily found. Leake, on the margins of the North York Moors, might be an example. There is a robust Norman church close to the busy A19 routeway and little else, but in 1852 a pit full of skeletons was discovered here. Along with the townlet of Northallerton, Leake was burned in 1318, when Sir James Douglas brought a host of 5000 raiders down from Scotland – and local tradition claims that the village was never again inhabited.

Ironically, we know more about English villages which were destroyed by men of God than by men of war. The destroyers were monks of the Cistercian order. This austere reforming order was founded towards the end of the eleventh century by St Stephen Harding, abbot of Citeaux, an Englishman, and St Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux. Bernard had a mystical devotion to the Virgin Mary and he sought to impose this devotion upon the communities of the new order. They were to live in secretive and lonely places, even in hostile and dangerous locations, for such settings would provide a foretaste

of the death to come. The first Cistercian house was established in woodland at Waverley in Surrey in 1128, but soon the monks realized that a more effective divorce from the evils of the lay world could be enjoyed amidst the solitude of hidden northern places. Fountains Abbey was founded by converted Benedictines who left the abbey of St Mary at York in 1132 and adopted a harsh pioneering life at the site where their new Cistercian abbey would rise. Uninviting as this setting then was, it was not entirely deserted and the solitude which the monks desired was only achieved by the enforced eviction of village communities who unwittingly intruded upon the privacy of their new neighbours. The monks gained control of nearby Herleshow in 1149 and the next time that its name was recorded the place existed not as a village but as a monastic farm. Cayton, lying just three miles from the abbey, had met a similar fate a few years earlier. The monks seldom seem to have allowed their Christian consciences to persuade them to rehouse evicted villagers, although, as we have seen in the cases of Old Byland and East Witton, they could act with charity.

The apparent callousness of the Cistercians towards village communities must have derived partly from their obsession with solitude and partly from the way in which they managed their estates. The hallmark of Cistercian farming was the independent monastic farm or 'grange'. These monks did not rely upon the sweat and toil of servile tenants. Instead they created their own workforce of lay brothers or 'conversi'. Occupying a niche somewhere between those of the peasant and the monk, the lay brothers were housed in substantial numbers at the abbey estate headquarters and they provided the workforces at the outlying granges. While some villages perished owing to their unfortunate proximity to a chosen abbey site, many more were torn down on the expanding abbey estates as grange farming supplanted peasant tillage. Fountains Abbey alone is known to have been responsible for the destruction of six villages and is suspected of having accounted for a further sixteen villages and hamlets, while in Leicestershire at least ten villages were obliterated by other monastic clearances.

While granges destroyed villages, they also led to their creation. All the villages in Upper Nidderdale developed after the Dissolution from nuclei provided by former monastic granges; Kilnsey in Wharfedale, which nestles beside the spectacular cliff of Kilnsey crag is another and a better-known example.

The monastic village clearances, which took place as the abbey estates expanded during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, did



little to stem the vigour of village England as a whole. Just as bands of brethren were setting forth from the older establishments to found new houses, so villagers must have been leaving overcrowded settlements to create new villages and hamlets. In the cases of a few well-documented examples we can learn how local lords sometimes masterminded the process of village and market foundation, but in general the picture is blurred. What we do know is that as the choicest lands and sites became fully exploited, so colonization was steered towards the margins, with communities being established on the more windswept, dry, sandy, stony, clayey and waterlogged settings. Nature's chessboard was becoming crowded with pieces, but this chessboard was not constant and could change its nature. Places which provided meagre sustenance when the climate was friendly could offer only starvation when temperatures shifted by just a degree or two. On the margins of village England a late spring, a little more cloud than expected in July or autumnal rain storms at harvest could spell disaster.

Between the Saxon period and the fourteenth century the growth of villages had been nurtured by a steadily improving climate which had lured settlers into places that would otherwise have seemed uninviting. Thirteenth-century England had rung to the tune of the axe as lands uncultivated since Roman times were cleared to sustain the swelling population of peasants. But in the fourteenth century the climatic downturn became obvious. Summers were cool and wet and the winters stormy. In the clay vales the ground could not absorb the mounting rainfall. Fields where grain had grown stayed cold and wet in the spring – and so they were converted to pasture.

Kilnsey in Wharfedale is one of the villages which grew from a monastic grange of Fountains Abbey.

Meanwhile, settlers were retreating from the sodden, cloud-hung uplands. In many barren places the people of the small villages and hamlets tried to compensate for falling yields by increasing the intensity of their efforts. But their actions only accelerated the exhaustion of the soil and hastened the day of desertion.

For many young villages situated in the vulnerable margins of the agricultural arena, death involved a gradual decay and desertion, and, when the communities disappeared, no written epitaph or record was left. Their only memorial was composed of the troughs in the ground which had been roads and ditches and the level platforms where houses had once stood.

There were other places where death was violent and dramatic. These were the coastal villages which were undermined or swept away in the great sea storms unleashed by a climate in torment. Since Roman times more than eighty square miles of land have been washed from the coast of Holderness. Villages and towns known to have perished there include Wilsthorpe, Auburn, Hartburn, Hyde, Withow, Cleton, Northorpe, Hornsea Burton, Hornsea Beck, Southorpe, Great Colden, Colden Parva, Old Aldbrough, Ringborough, Monkwell, Monkwise, Sand-le-Mere, Waxholme, Owthorne, Newsham, Old Withernsea, Out Newton, Dimlington, Tumarr, Northorp, Hoton, Old Kilnsea, Ravenspurn and the medieval trading port of Ravenser-Odd. Then, on the Humber side of Spurn Head, Tharles-thorpe, Frismersk, Penisthorpe, East Somerte, Orwithfleet, Sunthorpe and Burstall Priory have been lost. Not all these places perished in the storms of the fourteenth century. The climate continued to deteriorate until it reached the depths of the 'little ice age' of 1600–1750. Today new sea defences are urgently being built to preserve what remains of the village of Mappleton, which overlooks the watery graves of its former east-coast neighbours. Of course, if the starker predictions about global warming or the 'greenhouse effect' are realized, then the former events on the Holderness coast will seem trivial in comparison.

Only now are we beginning to appreciate – and perhaps not in time – that the environment which sustains us can prove vindictive when abused. This fact certainly applied to the relatively recent demise of the Devon fishing village of Hallsands. Towards the end of the nineteenth century shingle was dredged from Start Bay and used in the construction of the dockyard at Devonport. Nobody paused to consider the effects that this dredging might have upon local tides and currents, and in the January of 1917 the sea swept across the little village which sat on a rock shelf at the foot of the cliffs. The people of Hallsands only escaped death by fleeing their houses and scrambling

up the cliffs. Though homeless and destitute, they received no official compensation for the ill-conceived works which had ruined their lives.

In medieval times periodic local or national famines resulting from crop failures weakened peasant populations and thus exposed them to the ravages of disease. Starvation and plague together took their toll across the countryside. In the middle of the fourteenth century rural England accommodated more people than it could sustain. It was not a land of great towns and diverse opportunities, but a farming country of villages and hamlets, of which the regional capitals and market towns formed only a small part. Labour was cheap and overabundant, the margins of farming were contracting, the prevailing mood was one of anxiety and gloom and the stage was set for calamity.

Calamity arrived in the hideous form of the Black Death or the Pestilence. In 1346, the Pestilence, which was spread by rat fleas, erupted amongst a Tartar army laying siege to the Crimean city of Kaffa. It spread remorselessly across Europe and made its debut in England at Weymouth or Southampton in 1348; by the early spring of the following year London was in the grip of a terrible epidemic and the fate of the rest of Britain was decided. The country was utterly unable to resist the onslaught of a plague. The villages might have been designed for rats. The low roofs of thatch were havens for breeding, runs could weave in and out of dwellings which had shallow wall footings and earthen floors, and when an infected rat perished in the thatch above, the departing fleas could drop to new hosts slumbering in their filthy rags on straw mattresses below.

It is easy to see that the villages of the English grainlands were rat-infested places in which the Pestilence could wreak the most awful havoc. Nevertheless, the disease appears to have been no less lethal amongst monastic communities, where much higher standards of hygiene prevailed, and in the northern areas of livestock farming, where villages and grain stores were fewer and smaller. The disease continued to erupt periodically throughout the Middle Ages and remained a lurking threat during the seventeenth century.

Some experts have estimated that the Pestilence of the fourteenth century exterminated one third of the English population, others that half the population was annihilated. Wherever there is local knowledge of a lost village site, the Pestilence is invariably offered up as an explanation. Yet it is remarkably hard to trace villages that were killed by the Black Death. There are copious examples of little communities appealing to the authorities for tax relief on account of



The church ruins still stand at Egmore, a deserted village in Norfolk, because they are of worthless flint of no interest to builders.

Castle Camps, in Cambridgeshire, did not die, it migrated, leaving behind its church, which stands in the bailey of a Norman castle.



the savagery of the plague in their locality, but very few cases which prove the power of disease alone to depopulate a village for all time. Though we should not underestimate the physical and psychological horrors of events which could, in a matter of days, leave a surviving villager bereft of most of his relatives, half of his friends and workmates and no longer able to farm the surrounding lands in a satisfactory way.

On the estate at Steeple Barton in Oxfordshire **some 32 of the 36 tenants on the manor died** in the initial onslaught of the Pestilence from **1349 to 1350** and more than **600 acres of land lay neglected**; within four years the acreage of abandoned land had doubled and the manor house had become worthless. Oxfordshire has yielded more than its share of examples of villages directly exterminated by the Pestilence. They include Tusmore, Combe and also Tilgarsley, which had no fewer than 52 tenants before the plague, but which was said by a tax collector in 1359 to have been deserted for the last nine years.

More typically, however, the hard-hit village would endure a period during which a skeleton population struggled to survive before communal life revived completely. Woodeaton in Oxfordshire probably came as close to extinction as possible without dying. The Pestilence reduced the workforce to just two tenants who wanted to leave the stricken village. They were persuaded to remain by the abbot who controlled the estate. The village revived and shows no scars of its near demise. Cublington in Buckinghamshire was

completely abandoned. Yet the name of the settlement was preserved by colonists, perhaps former villagers, who returned and built their homes on higher ground overlooking the relics of the former streets, dwellings, castle mound and fishpond.

However, if the direct consequences of the Black Death upon village England were measured in mere dozens of losses, the indirect effects caused hundreds, indeed thousands, of desertions. On the one hand, this was due to the weakening of many village communities, particularly those that had struggled to exist on poor or worn-out lands before the Pestilence. On the other hand, the survivors of the tragedies found their circumstances transformed. Before the plague there had been no vacancies in the countryside of England, but now the lords of depleted manors were all offering vacant tenancies, even seeking to woo away the tenants of their neighbours. Few lords or manorial officials would return a runaway peasant to his master and few felt so secure that they could uphold the harsh old strictures when the villeins demanded better terms.

Gradually, the servile villagers learned to flex their muscles and they sought to discover the limits of their power in the new, half-empty rural world which the Pestilence had created. The lords, meanwhile, did not find it easy to substitute hired toilers for their feudal tenants. The same grim forces that had increased the value of the tenants had also fuelled a rise in wages as the artisans and hirelings discovered the scarcity value of their labour. Meanwhile, the village villeins and cottars were realizing that the obligations of service on the lord's demesne, so loathed and resented for centuries, might finally be shattered.

On manor after manor a power struggle ensued. In the field by day and in the village at dusk, the bondsmen grumbled and plotted. In one locality after another a consensus emerged that if the lord would not substitute rent-paying tenancies for feudal service, then trouble would follow. This struggle took the form of bloody-minded work-to-rule campaigns, carefully timed strikes, sabotage or simple obstinacy. If all these tactics failed, then the disgruntled villager could simply run away in the fairly secure knowledge that work and a more indulgent master could easily be found. In this way it was recorded at Theydon Garnon in Essex in 1390 that 'Simon Jakeboy withdrew John Pretylwell from the service of Thomas Mason into his own service in the occupation of malt monger, giving him 26s. 8d. [£1.33p] and food and clothing every year.' John, it was recorded, had formerly been a servile ploughman.

Some lords accepted the apparent inevitability of the circumstances, so that countrysides formerly peopled by bondsmen were now home to a vast class of rent-paying tenants. Others also recognized the decay of demesne farming and leased their lands out to one large farmer, usually *a yeoman rising in society*.

Amongst the ranks of both the lords and the yeomen there were hard-faced individuals who realized that land could yield a tidy income by employing a mere handful of workers, namely shepherds. These individuals had no thoughts of attracting labour but of evicting it. The most likely targets for eviction were the weaker villages which were emaciated by the decay of their environment and by the onslaughts of the Black Death. For centuries, England's wealth had been based on the export of wool. The Cistercians had long since demonstrated just how productive effectively run sheep ranges could be. Until Tudor times peasant tillage had been but little disrupted by competition with sheep, while under the old feudal system each lord had at least a nominal obligation to protect his tenants and their land resources. Then the old stability of village society was shaken away by the *Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, when *insurgents from Kent and Essex took the Tower of London*. On manor after manor the records of servitude were destroyed and the clerks who could rewrite the details were attacked. The Revolt was partly an attack on the continuation of villeinage, *fuelled by the egalitarian attitudes to Christianity associated with John Wyclif and John Ball*. It was partly a response to the toll taken by the interminable wars in France. But most directly it was a revolt against the *unjust poll tax of 1380*. It was against this background of trauma and jarring change that the greatest ever assault on village England took place.

At the start of the fourteenth century England was exporting about 30,000 sacks of wool each year, but the trade in wool declined as native spinners and weavers were *encouraged to convert the harvest into cloth*. By the end of the century the exports of raw wool had been halved, although cloth exports had greatly increased. *By 1485 England was exporting 50,000 cloths, each cloth being 72 feet long and just over 5 feet broad*. It was in this same year that State Inquiries began to collect and record information, which tells us about the wholesale destruction of villages, a process which had already gathered some momentum. It would continue until the early sixteenth century in the Midlands and through the Elizabethan era in the north. *The motive for the destruction was profit*. As one sixteenth-century pamphleteer wrote: '... who will maintain husbandry which is the nurse of every County as long as sheep bring so great

Substantial, ivy-encrusted and flower-garlanded village houses, like these at Long Melford, in Suffolk, give a completely false impression of the medieval village house.



gain? who will be at cost to keep a dozen in his house to milk kine [cattle], make cheese, carry it to the market when one poor soul may by keeping sheep get him a greater profit . . . who will not be contented for to pull down houses of husbandry so that he may stuff his bags full of money?’

John Rous, a chantry priest of Warwick who died in 1491, left a clear statement of his revulsion towards events that he had witnessed: ‘What shall be said of the modern destruction of villages which brings Death to the commonwealth? The root of this evil is greed. The plague of avarice infects these times and it blinds men. They are not sons of God, but of Mammon.’

The sons of Mammon who evicted villagers, tore down their dwellings, converted the village ploughlands into sheep pastures and enclosed the estate with hedgerows came from several backgrounds, but most were local men. Some, like the notorious Knightleys of Fawsley in Northamptonshire, belonged to the land-owning nobility and some, like the Spencers of Wormleighton in Warwickshire, had risen from yeoman backgrounds. It was mainly in the sixteenth century, when the worst of the evictions were past, that speculators from outside, like wool merchants, clothiers, tanners, lawyers and goldsmiths became involved in buying and depopulating land. The evictors were sometimes the very people responsible for upholding justice. In 1478 an estate at Steeton in Yorkshire was purchased by Chief Justice Fairfax. Shortly afterwards the small village community of around thirty adults was evicted and the site of the settlement incorporated into a manor park. In 1525 the last traces of the dwellings were obliterated by the creation of a great ornamental pond.

The scale of the destruction throughout the Midlands, parts of East Anglia and eastern Yorkshire was amazing. At a time when four or five decades of assaults on village England still had to take place, John Rous was able to list some fifty-eight villages which he knew had been destroyed. Professor M. W. Beresford was able to identify all bar one of these places, and all lay within just a dozen miles of Warwick. But the scale of destruction in Warwickshire could also be encountered in Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Oxfordshire and several other counties. The theme of the once bustling countryside that was now occupied only by the shepherd and his dog occurs again and again in the writings of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The most famous expression of it was provided by Sir Thomas More in *Utopia*.

The sheep that were wont to be so meek and tame and so small eaters now, as I hear say, be become so great devourers and so wild that they eat up and

swallow down the very men themselves. They consume, destroy and devour whole fields, houses and cities.

One shepherd or herdsman is enough to eat up that ground with cattle to the occupying whereof about husbandry many hands were requisite.

Look in what parts of the realm doth grow the finest and therefore dearest wool, there noblemen and gentlemen: yea and certain Abbots . . . leave no ground for tillage, they enclose all into pasture: they throw down houses: they pluck down towns [i.e. villages] and leave nothing standing but only the church to be made a sheep-cote.

The dissent surrounding the destruction of villages in Tudor times had more than just a moral dimension. In 1488 a special act was passed to stem the depopulation of the Isle of Wight, where the destruction of more than twenty villages raised the threat of French occupation. More universal was the fear of serious revolt as the lanes of England filled with bitter, dispossessed villagers. In 1489 legislation was enacted against the 'Pulling Down of Towns'. A series of acts in the sixteenth century attempted to reverse the clearances, but successful prosecutions were few and far between. Some desertions were blamed by the accused upon the Black Death, while those under investigation could often argue, quite truthfully, that the evictions had taken place before the introduction of legislation. But it was very much the case that the investigating commissioners found it distasteful to side with grumbling and inarticulate peasants against landowners of their own class and background. Later in the sixteenth century a rise in the price of bread grain stimulated tillage and it was this economic reality rather than any triumph of justice which caused the sheep clearances to peter out.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Scottish Highlands experienced a brutal episode of clearances, suggesting that Mammon was still at the helm of national life. In the 1890s a butcher of Ramsbury, named Henry Wilson, bought two large farms in the Wiltshire village of Snap. The land was converted into a sheep run for use in Wilson's sheep-dealing ventures, and this loss of employment in farming caused the village to be deserted amidst scenes of controversy in which Wilson's sons successfully sued the local MP for describing the family as oppressive and tyrannical.

By Elizabethan times the ghastly sheep clearances were virtually over, but the pruning of the village population continued at a less frantic level. Tillage could now compete with sheep farming, though the decay of medieval feudalism had both bad and good consequences for the villagers. Landowners now gained their income from rents and leases rather than from the working of the demesne by unpaid vassals. Where land was expected to support a large population of

peasants at, or a little above, the level of starvation, there was little left that could be converted into profit in the form of rents. If, however, the lord could replace a swarm of village peasants and their dependants with just a few prosperous tenants who employed their own wage-earning labourers, then higher rents could be obtained. Villagers were not evicted immediately, though in many places no opportunity was lost to buy out small freeholders or persuade copyholders to become leaseholders. In ways such as these lands worked by two dozen families could become divided between just a few large farms. The village meanwhile would shrink and crumble until all that was left were three or four farmsteads separated by empty land and a decaying church standing guard over the platforms and troughs which were once house sites and streets. It is a theme that is repeated again and again in counties such as Norfolk.

The Age of Enlightenment did not always foster more humane attitudes towards humble villagers. Between Elizabethan and Victorian times any village community living close to their lord had good reason to fear eviction – and the more wealthy and powerful the lord, the greater the threat that he posed. This new threat to villages resulted from changes in the social order and in the way that status was flaunted.

Members of the feudal aristocracy had lived rather rough and ready lives. Much time was spent in journeying between the various manors that they owned – only the most influential had castles – and social status derived from the ownership of large amounts of land, pedigree and military might. The Tudor monarchy achieved a monopoly of power in the realm, castles became redundant, while entrepreneurs and courtiers gained access to the ranks of the aristocracy. New ways of living and of proclaiming status were needed and a fashion for immensely costly mansions set in tastefully manicured grounds was born.

None of this need have posed a threat to villages, were it not for the fact that many of the old family seats earmarked for improvement had villages in very close proximity, while the creation or enlargement of parks extended private land into what had been communal territory. The relationship between the lord and his tenants had scarcely been a close one in feudal times, but the manor house had served as the administrative hub of the estate and there had been much coming and going as villagers organized their work, played their various roles in the proceedings of the manor court or arrived to enjoy one of the seasonal feasts. Now the relationship became

much more remote. The lord lived with his household of family, numerous guests and domestic servants. There was little place in this tasteful setting for the grubby ploughman or foul-mouthed smith.

Those who regularly visit stately homes are likely to have noticed a similarity in many settings. Not far from the house there is often an isolated medieval church – more likely than not crammed with family memorabilia and used as a private chapel. Around the church the great lawn of the park may be humped and grooved by earthworks, while the grassland beyond is corrugated with the sinuous, curving ridges and furrows of medieval ploughland. This is the landscape of emparking. In some places a replacement village for the one or ones swept away stands deferentially outside the gates of the park, but in others the villagers were rendered utterly homeless.

One of the earliest examples of the rehousing of the evicted community took place at Holdenby in Northamptonshire around 1587. Some years earlier, Sir Christopher Hatton, destined to become Lord Chancellor to Queen Elizabeth I, had a great mansion with a classical façade built around four great courtyards. Later the garden was enlarged so that it engulfed the church and the village which stood close by. Another village stood to the north-east of the new mansion and it was rebuilt and enlarged to accommodate the displaced families. (The mansion endured for less than a century, but a smaller one was built there in the 1870s.)

Frequently the victims of **emparking** were the villages whose growth had been stunted or whose communities had been weakened by previous disasters. In the case of Milton in Dorset, however, the victim was not a village but a small town. Milton had existed as a market centre for at least seven centuries and had expanded in the precinct of its medieval abbey; in 1770 it supported more than one hundred households. Trouble appeared in the form of Lord Milton, formerly Joseph Damer MP. He had his house, Milton Abbey, and its grounds remodelled by William Chambers and Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown, but then claimed that the presence, just beyond his garden wall, of the little town was intruding upon his privacy. Between 1771 and 1785 he systematically destroyed Milton by demolishing its homes as their leases expired. Brown and Chambers developed the nearby dry valley site for the replacement village of Milton Abbas and designed the cottages of cob and thatch. Only about forty such cottages were provided, so that the former residents of Milton found themselves crammed together, with as many as four families inhabiting a single cottage. Outwardly Milton Abbas was, as it is today, a place of visual charm, but in the early years of the ‘model’ village each dwelling must have seethed with bitter resentment.

*Overleaf:
The excavated footings of
dwellings at the deserted
village at Hound Tor,
Devon.*



Excavated Footings of dwellings
at the deserted village at Hound Tor, Devon



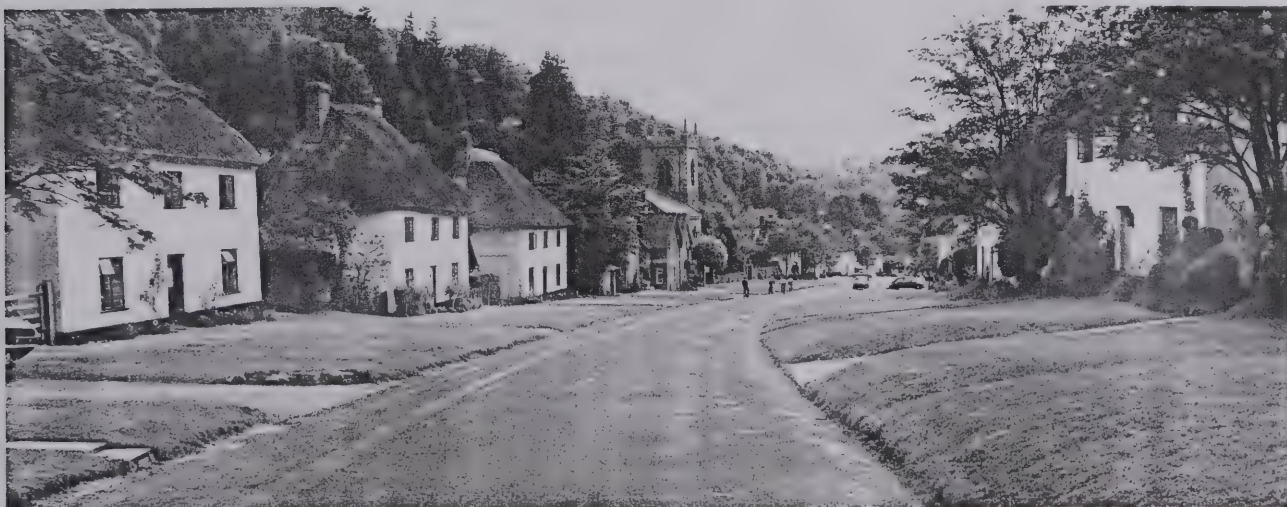
The plundering of Milton took place at a time when humanitarian sentiments were beginning to be aroused following the publication of Oliver Goldsmith's poem *The Deserted Village* in 1770:

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain:
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But chok'd with sedges, works its weedy way.

His supposedly mythical village of 'sweet Auburn' seems to have no other connection with the Auburn swept from the Holderness coast, though it was widely associated with Houghton in Norfolk. Houghton was emparked by Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole in the 1720s. Recently it has emerged that Goldsmith was probably writing about the emparking of the Oxfordshire village of Newnham. Though only a village, Newnham may have been as populous as Milton. Nevertheless, it was removed by Earl Harcourt because it intruded upon his solitude, and he built the replacement village of Nuneham Courtenay about a mile away. Some old villagers were much less enthusiastic about the move than their master, but the earl apparently employed a poodle poet, William Whitehead, to laud his tender treatment of the villagers.

By Victorian times the crude emparking of villages had become unacceptable to the national community. By this time, however, the showcase of stately homes was almost fully stocked. The lonely church and the lost village site beside it had almost become as much a

Milton Abbas was built to house families evicted from the medieval market town of Milton.





*Wimpole Hall in
Cambridgeshire
commandeered an old
village site.*

part of the aristocratic setting as the ornamental lake and walled garden. Castle Howard, Harewood, Wimpole, Houghton, Ickworth and Lilford are just a few of the noble mansions which have the corpse of one or more villages for company.

The landscape of the deserted village varied according to the degree of destruction – usually by ploughing – which followed abandonment. Rather than being pulled down with the homes, churches generally disappeared later, most being robbed for valuable building stone. Earthworks that often survive include the hollowed troughs of former streets and lanes, roughly rectangular house plots which may still reveal the platforms where the dwellings themselves stood, and other features associated with the former villages, like Norman motte mounds, embanked fishponds or the moats of old manor houses. As well as the villages which perished completely, there are thousands that have shrunk, but survive. At these places one can see relics of former life; they are an indication of the former extent of the withered settlement.



*One of the best surviving
Saxon preaching crosses is
at Irton, in Cumbria.*



*Right: a rare example of
a Norman village church
with a twin-gabled tower
is at Fingest, in the
Chilterns.*

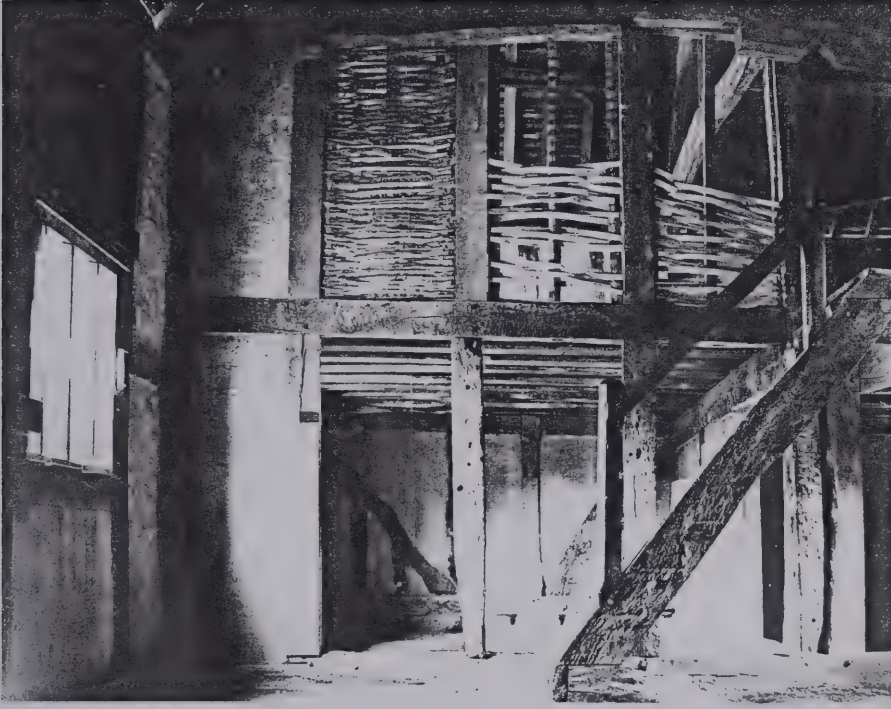


The unspoilt church at Barfreestone, Kent, is small but renowned for its carved decoration (see p. 51), probably accomplished in the twelfth century by craftsmen working on the cathedrals of Canterbury or Rochester.

other occupations also kept a few sheep, cattle or pigs and perhaps a nag. Consequently, homes were full of the paraphernalia of farming, milking, brewing and the processing and storing of freshly killed or harvested farm produce. Whereas today we think of a home in terms of a lounge, kitchen, bedrooms, study, bathroom and so on, the rooms in a typical Yetminster village dwelling of 1668 were listed as follows: the hall, which was the main living-room; the buttery, packed with ten barrels; the milkhouse, with its butter tub, cheese vats and cheese press; the hall chamber, serving as a bedroom; and the cheese loft, which was used as a second bedroom. By Elizabethan times all but the poorest villagers had beds and bedding and some had feather mattresses. But beds tended to be found in what we would regard as the most unlikely corners. The cheese loft of one Yetminster farm of 1707 contained a bed and thirty-six cheeses and there was also a feather bed in the kitchen chamber.

What may seem to our eyes to be domestic anarchy also prevailed in the north of the country. We can learn this through studying inventories that were compiled when country people died. William Coates was a blacksmith of Burnt Yates hamlet near Harrogate. When he died in 1673, the contents of his purse and his apparel were valued at £1 15s. 4d. (about £1.77 in today's money) and his accounts showed that he was owed 18s. 4d. (about 92p). His 'house' or hall contained two tables but, strangely, only one chair, a cupboard, a chest, a brass pot, a kettle and four pieces of pewter. In the adjoining parlour there were a bed and bedclothes, a chest, a coffer, three stools and a trough for making dough, while the small chamber housed another bed and a cradle. A modest set of work tools, some coal and a pile of logs lay in the smithy and there were three hens and six chicks in the yard.

A neighbour, James Kilvington, died in 1678. He was evidently a small tenant farmer and linen worker, for his inventory shows that he kept a flock of 30 sheep, had 20 cattle of various ages, a mare, a nag, a foal and a stock of fodder as well as a store of cloth. Again we find the home cluttered with the paraphernalia of living, working, sleeping and food processing. The main living-room contained two tables, consisting of boards and frames, three chairs, three buffet stools and a bench, a candlestick, shelves stacked with pewter, sides of beef and bacon, two spits and tongs and a great jumble of cheese-making equipment, including 45 milk bowls. In the parlour there were a cupboard, another frame table, a chest, a bedstead and bedding, 34 yards of hemp and linen cloth that James had woven and some butter-making and brewing equipment: two churns, four tubs,



The interior of a late fifteenth-century merchant's house from Bromsgrove rebuilt at the Avoncroft Museum of Buildings, showing the steps from the hall to the private sitting room and sleeping loft above. The structure is of timber, the walls of wattle covered in clay.

two barrels and a bottle. Dairying also intruded into the small third chamber, where there were three beds and bedding and four large cheeses.

The Great Rebuilding was a mixture of revolution and evolution. The medieval long-house had only one room, or at best a passageway and wattle screen to separate the family and its beasts. In the far west and the north-east of England one-roomed dwellings, often roofed in turf, could still be found in Victorian times. In the south-east dwellings with two storeys had been the norm for almost three centuries. The village long-house was superseded in the more prosperous parts of the south and east by the two-roomed cottage home well before the end of the Middle Ages. Livestock were excluded from the house, which now consisted of a hall or living-room with a hearth, and a chamber or bower, used mainly for sleeping. At first smoke from the hearth still drifted around the open rafters, windows had canvas blinds but no glass and all the dramas of family life were enacted upon rush-strewn floors of trampled earth.

Early in the sixteenth century lofts reached by ladders were inserted into southern village homes and provided extra sleeping and storage space. This move led to single-storey dwellings being converted into homes with upper floors and wooden staircases, and

*Overleaf:
Upper left: close studding displayed in the medieval village guildhouse of Whittlesford in Cambridgeshire. Bottom left and opposite: the Great Rebuilding preserved in the landscape of Elstow in Bedfordshire.*



Timbered Houses



Walled fields









HAVE photos... 

Places in Essex County, England, mentioned in Muir's book,
"The Village's of England".

Rivenhall .. churches were placed in isolated positions, at spots
that had experienced both Roman and early Saxon settlements, like
Rivenhall ...

Rivenhall, Essex .. At Rivenhall in Essex only one-twentieth of
the area of the churchyard was excavated, but even so the remains
of twelve different buildings were exposed, including a Roman
villa, church built of timber, while the Saxon church which followed
experienced five major rebuildings before reaching it's 19th century
form.

Hadstock, Essex .. Eight great phases of rebuilding have been re-
cognized.

Thaxted, Essex .. Guildhalls are old public buildings that might
be mistaken for market houses. In villages that are really declined
trading towns, they were sometimes built by local craft guilds.
There is no better example than the guildhall built for cutlers
of Thaxted in Essex around 1420. Page 80

Greensted, Essex .. The original Saxon churches were often made
of timber. Just one example, much altered, survives at Greensted
in Essex. Page 139

Thaxted, Essex .. photo on page 152 is of Almshouses and windmill
at Thaxted, Essex.

Great Sampford, Essex .. photo, rethatching work at Great Sampford,
in Essex. Page 178

This material is taken from the "History of the Fitch Family" compiled by Roscoe Conkling Fitch and published by the Fitch Family on March 11, 1930. Vol. I page 11,

There is some question as to whether the Fitch Family descended from the Normans or the Saxons. Several distinguished Fitch men who have made a study of the family history think the family goes back to the Norman Conquest of 1066 AD and give this as proof: "Norant's History of County Essex, England says that Robert de Gernon came from France with William the Conqueror. William the Conqueror gave to this Robert Gernon, his blood relative, the manor of Waysbury as a special donation. Gernon held it as part of his barony of which the head was at Stanstead-Montfitchet in Essex. He built a castle on a hill which he presented to his son William de Gernon who dropped the name de Gernon and assumed the name Montfitchet. William married Margaret, daughter of Gilbert, second Lord of Clare. They had a son Gilbert de Montfitchet who had a son Richard de Montfitchet. He was one of the barons at Runnymede in 1225 AD who wrested the charter from King John and was one of the twenty-five barons appointed to rule the realm. In 1236 he was made Justice of the Royal Forest in Essex and in 1242 High Sheriff of Essex, and Hertfordshire and Governor of Hertfordshire Castle. His third son, Roger de Montfitchet, had a son John who tired of the prefix "Mont" and spelled his name Fitch, leaving off the "t". He was granted Armorial bearings in the year 1263 and was of the "Fitch Castle of the North" in 1294."

Professor Asa Fitch was of the opinion that the English Fitches were not Norman but Saxon. He compiled a genealogy, which was never published. At his death the manuscript was deposited with the New York Genealogical Society and can be seen at the Society's Building in New York City. He believed that the Fitches are one of the old Anglo-Saxon families families of England who came over when they subdued the Ancient Britons and drove them into Wales and Cornwall and that they settled in East Saxony or Essex about 530 AD.

"In the Herald's Visitations to Essex the Fitch Family is traced back step by step to William the second son of John Fitch who was living in Fitch Castle in the parish of Widdington in the north west part of Essex in the twenty-second year of the reign of Edward I, 1294 AD, two hundred years before Columbus discovered America.

Whatever race we came from we do know that John Fitch of "Fitch Castle of the North" in Widdington, County Essex, is the direct ancestor of the four Fitch brothers who settled in Connecticut, and that he was living in 1294 AD. His name appears as of that date in the ancient records of the British Museum, London. Members of the Fitch Family bore a coat of arms through the centuries as substantiated by the Ancient Records of the College of Arms, and the British Museum."

William Fiche(Fyche)

b. about 1400. Received a grant of lands in the Manor of Widdington, Essex County, January 18, 1441. Bought other lands there from Richard Pelworth January 16, 1459. Death reported at Court of Manor held April 24, 1463.

Found to be heir of his father by Inquisitions April 24, 1466 and May 14, 1467. He was then thirty years old. His death was reported at the Court of Manor of Widdington held April 9 1468.

Mar. Juliana-----. She was appointed guardian of their son April 9, 1463. Her death was reported at the Court of Manor of Widdington held November 9, 1514.

Found to be heir of his father by Inquisition April 9, 1463, he being then three years old. He was admitted to his inheritance November 3, 1437 and to his mother's lands in Widdington November 9, 1514. His death was reported at the Court of Manor of Widdington November 5, 1514 and at the Court of Manor of Widdington December 23, 1514.

Mar. Agnes Alger, also Algore, only child and heir of Robert Algore, Lord of the Castle of Widdington and other lands. She was admitted tenant of her father's lands December 21, 1493. She died before September 25, 1533.

Of Panfield and Bocking, Essex County, England. He was admitted tenant of Hartshede etc in Widdington (being his mother's lands) September 25, 1533. He was mentioned in the Court of Rolls of Widdington May 6, 1546. Held a house and freeland in Bocking and a house in Bredford Street there which he bought of William Dobson. His will, dated January 1553/9 was proved February 22, following in the Consistory Court of London, England. Mar. Margery----- who was the sole executrix of her husband's will 1559.

of Braintree aforesaid, afterwards of Sudbury and subsequently of Edwardstone, Suffolk County. Mentioned in his father's will of 1559, he being then 21. Bought a house and land in Widdington Essex County from John Shepparde (Stine Michelm 1603). Mentioned as deceased in the will of his cousin Thomas Fitch of Margaretting, 1606. His will dated May 1605 was proved June 13 following.

Mar. First, Jane Burwood of Aldeburgh, Essex County, at Canfield. Marriage license (Bishop of London) September 13, 1574.

Second wife, Bridget, widow firstly of John Goss of Edwardstone and secondly of John French of Edwardstone whose will, dated January 1602, was proved March 2 following. Died August 1603, buried at Edwardstone 30th of same month.

Third wife Joane, widow of -----Taylor.
Mentioned in her husband's will 1605.

His son
Thomas Fitch

He was the eldest son of George Fitch and Joan Thurgood Fitch. He was born 1590 and christened 1598. He was a great land owner and cloth manufacturer. He was possessed of a large amount of real and personal property for that day as evidenced by the fact that his wife, who was appointed executrix of his will, was required to give bond for as much as 2000 pounds. He died January 1632. His will was dated December 1632 and proved February 12, 1632/3.

Mar. Anne, daughter of John Reve of Gosfield Essex County at St. Mary's Church in Bocking Essex County, August 4, 1611. Sole executrix to her father's will 1633 and to her son Nathaniel 1649. After her husband's death she accompanied four of her sons to the New World and was living with her son Joseph in Hartford, Connecticut in 1669.

His sons
Thomas Fitch
Rev. James
Samuel
Joseph

b. October 14, 1612
Mar. Anne Stacie, daughter of William Stacie of Bocking on November 1, 1632. He served in the Parliamentary Wars in England and came to America in 1650. He was known as "Mr" in 1654. In 1655 Thomas Fitch and Richard Olmstead were appointed by the colony of Norwalk to "look after the Indians". They had under their command eighteen horsemen, four of whom were from Norwalk. They must have had a quieting effect on the Indians as they did not cause the people of Norwalk much trouble until 1675. In 1655, Thomas Fitch was chosen by the town of Norwalk, clerk of their Train Band and confirmed as "Recorder of Laws" by the General Court February 26, 1659. He was Selectman in 1659, King's Commissioner in 1669 and every year thereafter for twenty-five years. He was Deputy to the General Court in 1673, 1676, 1680-86, 1691-2, and 1694 and Deputy Governor of Connecticut. At the town meeting held December 28, 1636, the "Towne did vote Mr, Thomas Fitch for to be seated in the upper, great round seat in the Meeting House as he is the King's Commissioner".

Rev. James Fitch

Born in Bocking, Essex County on December 24, 1622. He was the first of the four brothers to come to America, arriving in 1638 aged sixteen years as stated on the inscription of his gravestone in the old cemetery in Lebanon, Connecticut. He finished his theological training under the Reverend Thomas Hooker and Reverend Samuel Stone. Cotton Mather placed the Reverend James in his second class of New England ministers, consisting of "young scholars whose education for their designed ministry not being finished, came over from England with their friends and had their education perfected in this country before the college was old enough in maturity to bestow its laurels". Rev. James Fitch was ordained at

Saybrook, Connecticut in 1646 as the first minister of the newly founded church. The ceremony a Congregational ordination in the strictest sense of the term, was graced by the presence of Rev. Hooker and Rev. Stone. In May 1659, the people of Saybrook signed a petition making application to the General Court of Connecticut for permission to found a new settlement, at Norwich. This permission was granted. There was a good deal of contention as to whether Rev. James Fitch would go to Norwich or remain at Saybrook as he was greatly beloved by both sides. After solemn prayer and great deliberation, he decided to go with the majority and considered such as his duty. This left Saybrook without a pastor for over ten years. In his later years the Rev. James Fitch retired to Lebanon Connecticut which he founded in 1702 and named in memory of the "lofty Cedars of Lebanon" found in the Bible as being used by Solomon to build the Temple.

Samuel Fitch

Mentioned in his father's will of 1632 and that of his brother Nathaniel in 1648. The earliest positive record of him is that he was engaged in 1650 to keep the school of Hartford for three years beginning January 1, 1649/50 and was a freeman in 1651. He is spoken of as "Esq" which proves that he ranked as a gentleman. Like his brothers he was prominent in local affairs. He was representative to the General Court 1654-55. He married Mrs. Susannah Whiting, widow of "Worshipful Mr. William Whiting" of Hartford Connecticut. He died in 1659.

Joseph Fitch

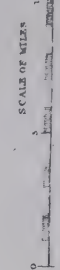
Mentioned in his father's will of 1632 and that of his brother Nathaniel in 1648. He was the youngest of the four brothers. He settled in Norwalk with his oldest brother Thomas but remained there only three years. He sold his property to Mark St. John (Sention) and went from Norwalk to Northampton, Massachusetts in 1655, and then back to Hartford in 1660. He married Mary Stone, youngest daughter of the Rev. Samuel Stone. Before 1672 he removed to Windsor, Conn. where he purchased a twentieth part of the town. He was alive in 1713. He was Representative to the General Council 1662-63. His farm was situated near the boundary lines of the present towns of East Hartford and East Windsor, Connecticut. One of his descendants was Lieutenant John Fitch of steam boat fame.

There has been much uncertainty as to the exact date of the arrival of these four Fitch brothers and their father in America. Samuel and Joseph are mentioned in the will of their brother Nathaniel in 1648 as living in England. Thomas, Samuel and Joseph are all colonial settlers of 1650 so apparently they came sometime between 1648 and 1650. James came first in 1633. Thomas and Joseph are among the founders of Norwalk. Joseph was living with his mother in Hartford on October 21, 1669 and Samuel is mentioned as a school teacher in Hartford Connecticut.



- Reference to the Unions
- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Rayston Part | 12 Bradstree |
| 2 Southen Wadden | 13 Witham |
| 3 Linton Part | 14 Edmington Part |
| 4 Rickridge Part | 15 Epping |
| 5 Hildrad | 16 Chipping Ong |
| 6 Sudbury Part | 17 Chelmsford |
| 7 Linton & Widdow | 18 Malden |
| 8 Chelmsford | 19 West Ham |
| 9 Tindring | 20 Romford |
| 10 Bishop Stortford | 21 Baltham |
| 11 Dunmow | 22 Rochford |
| | 23 Great |

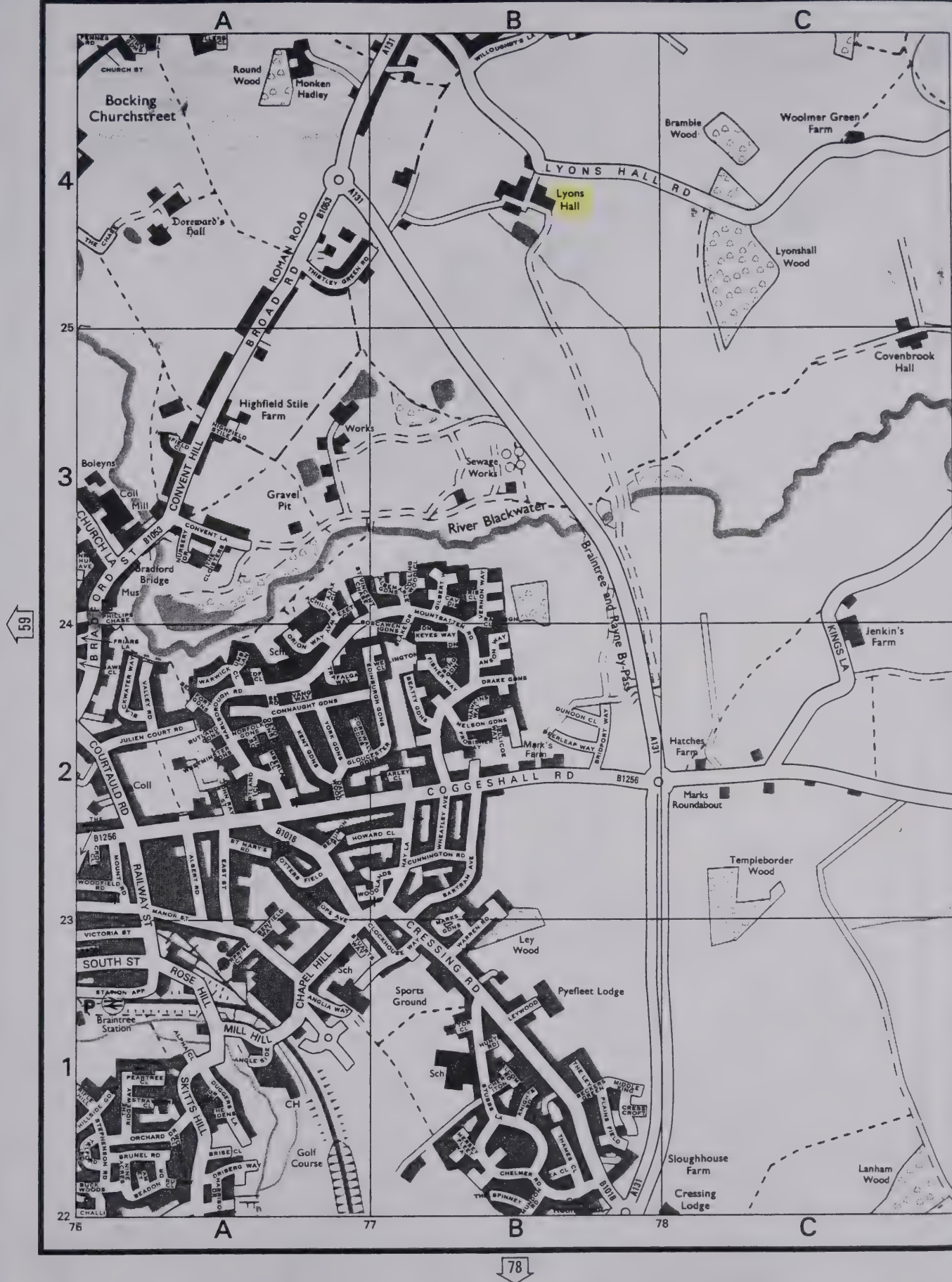
ESSEX



Light





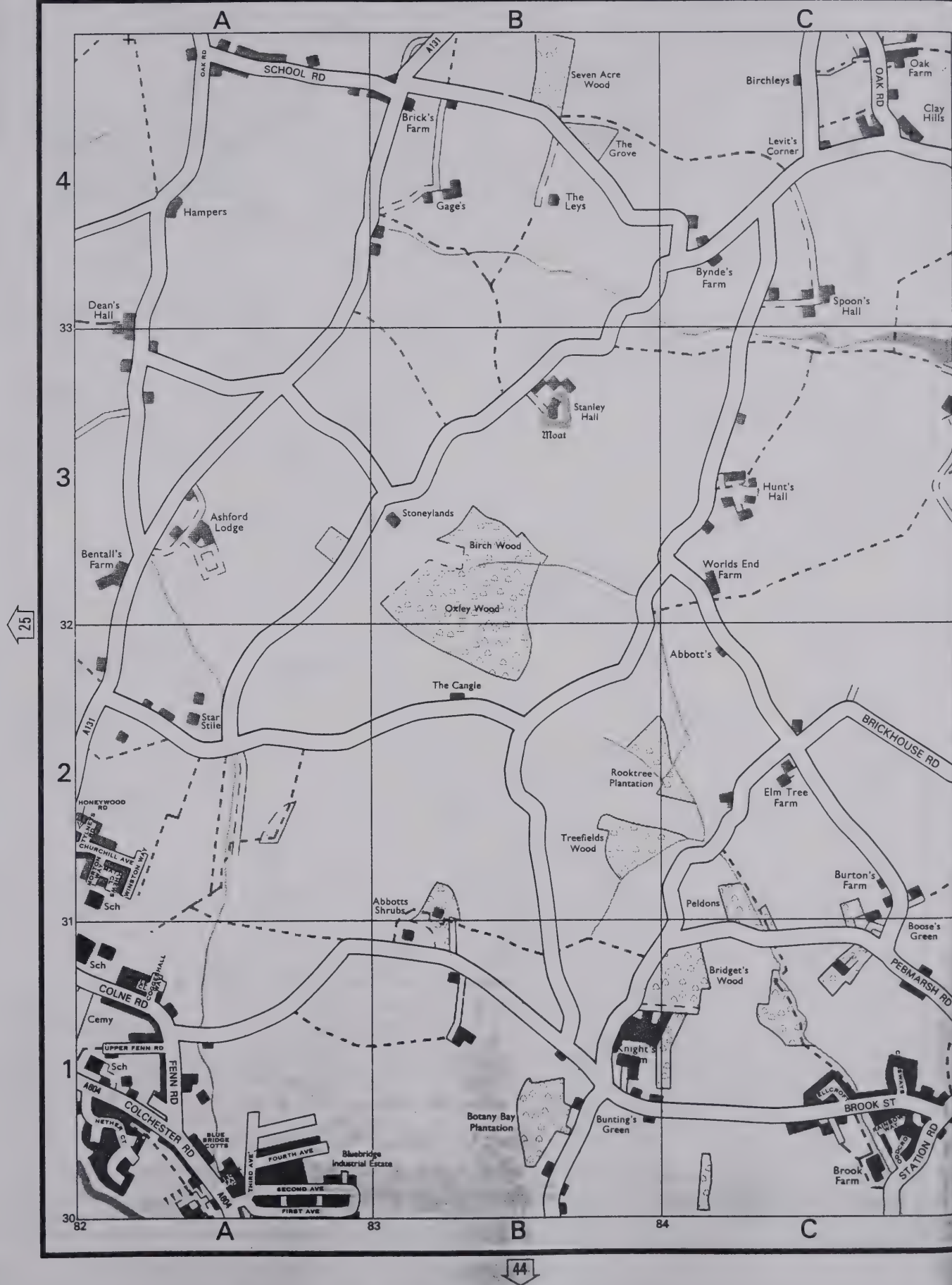






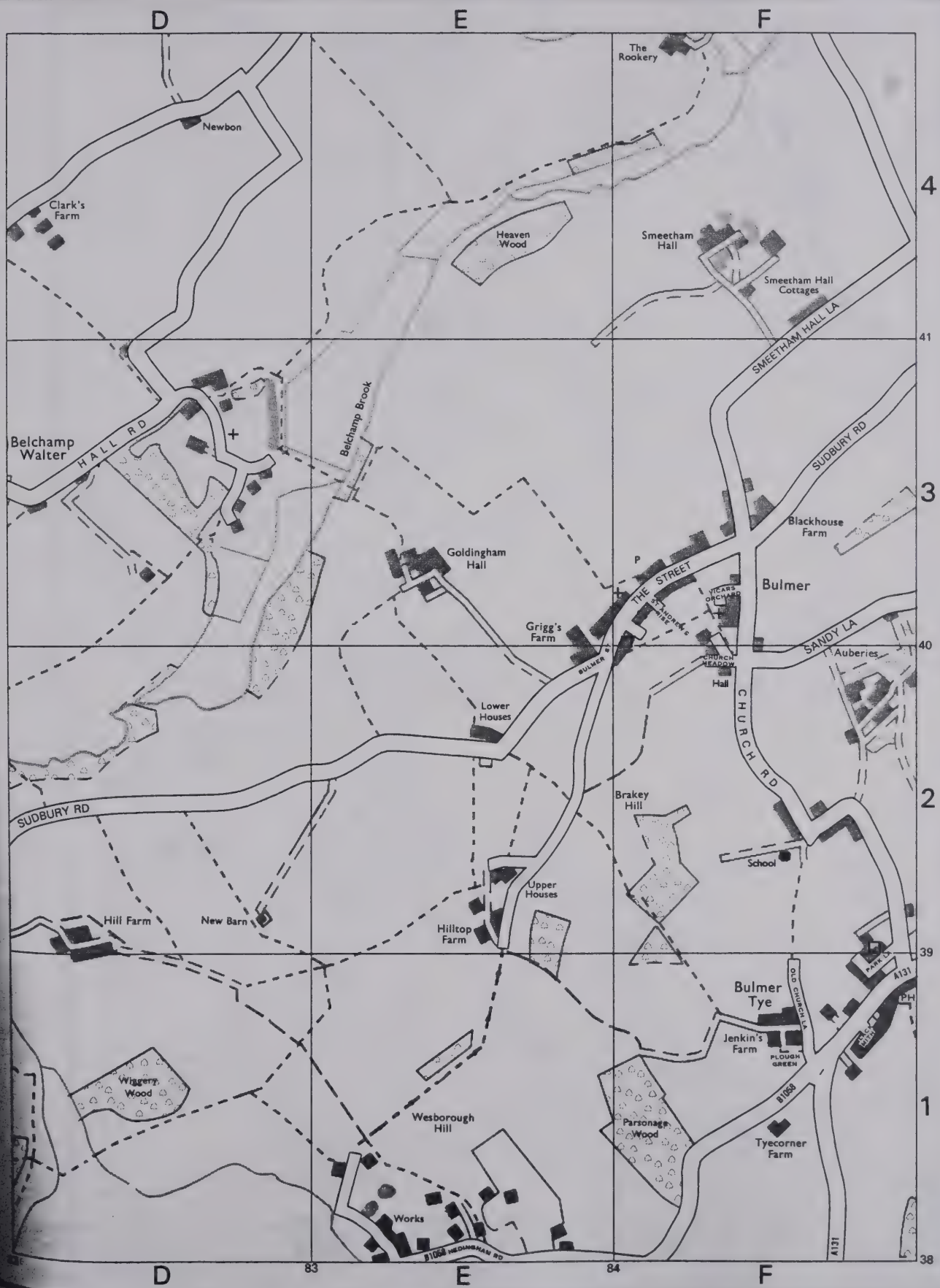


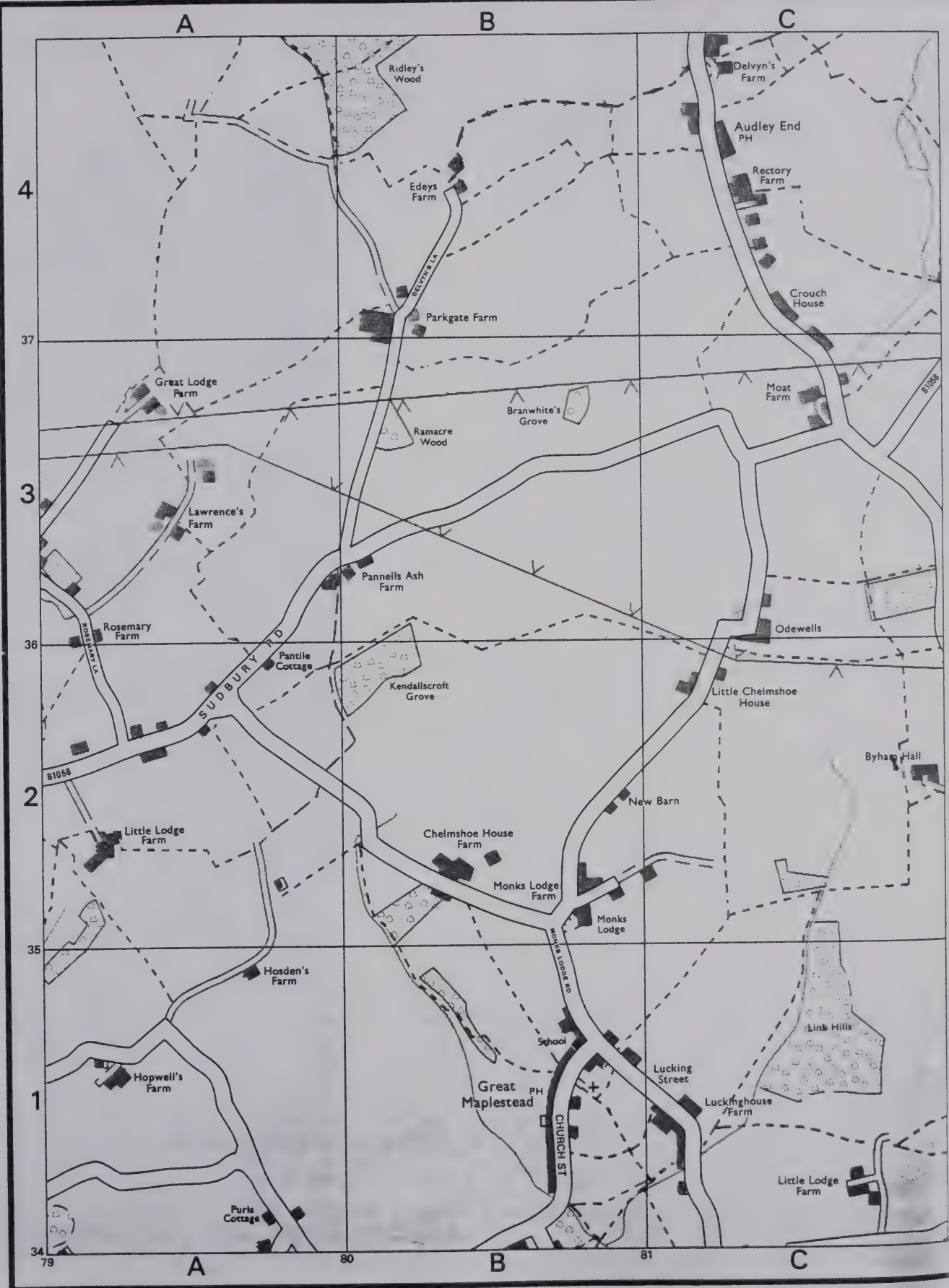
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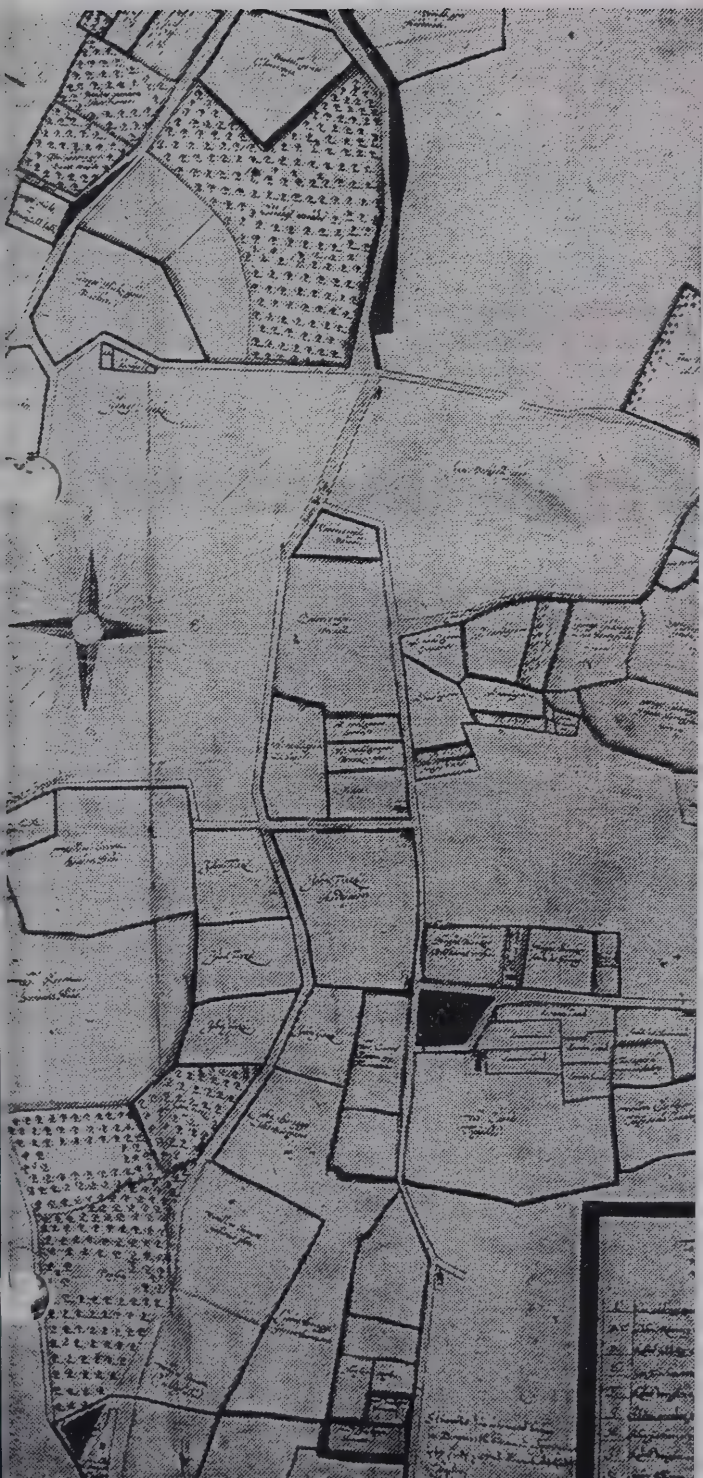








MANOR of Henny



St. Mary's Church



George held

Cobiden hill

Cobiden Fen - subject to flooding

Collman's Croft

Hoggarden (marshy land)

The Stewes (fish or pheasants)

Church pittle - enclosed plot

Home fen

Home meadow

Hether lies - closer

Further lies - further

Large mede

PARifield (prairie/meadow)

House called Colliers

Springolds

Pilgrim Springolds



George^B Fitch's lands

Manor of Henny Near Sudbury
St. Marys Church



Sallman

Heck

1-2-0

George fit

Par

Geo Gilling

Brook

Geo Gilling

Brook

Geo

Gilling

Brook

Geo

Brook

Geo Gilling

Brook

Geo Gilling

Brook

1-3-20

Geo fit

Brook

George fit

Brook

1-2-0

Georg fitch

Brook

10-0-30

22

Isaac Van Dusen

George^B Fitch's Lands

MANOR of Henny

Near Sudbury

St. Mary's Church





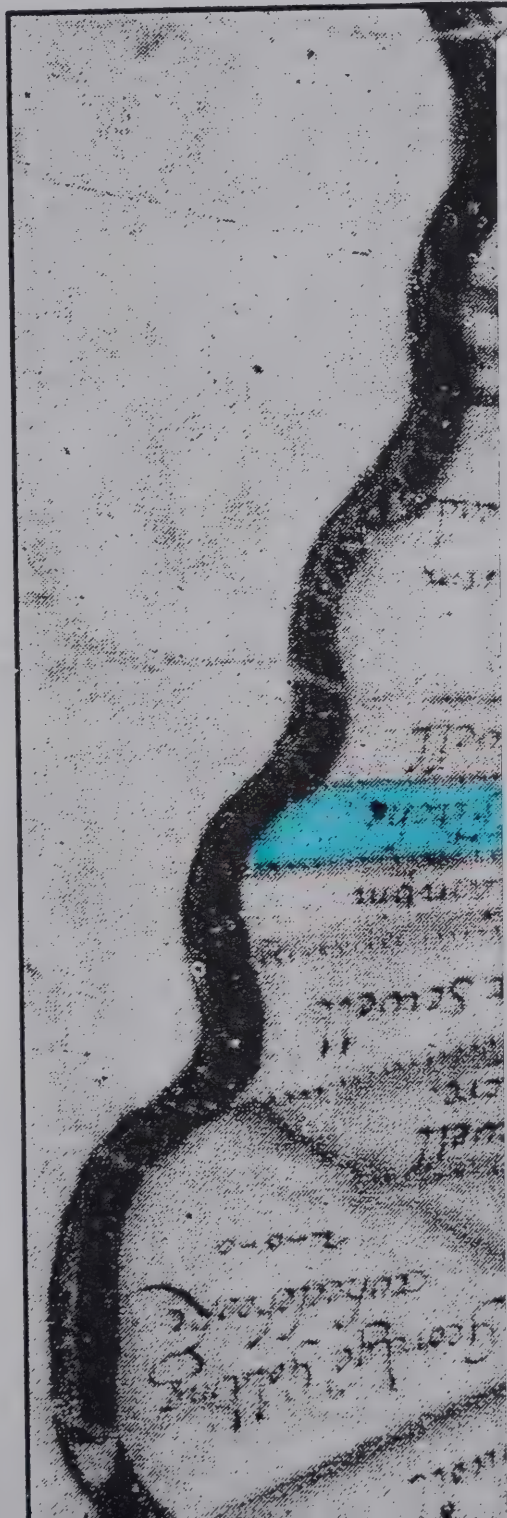






1001

Georg



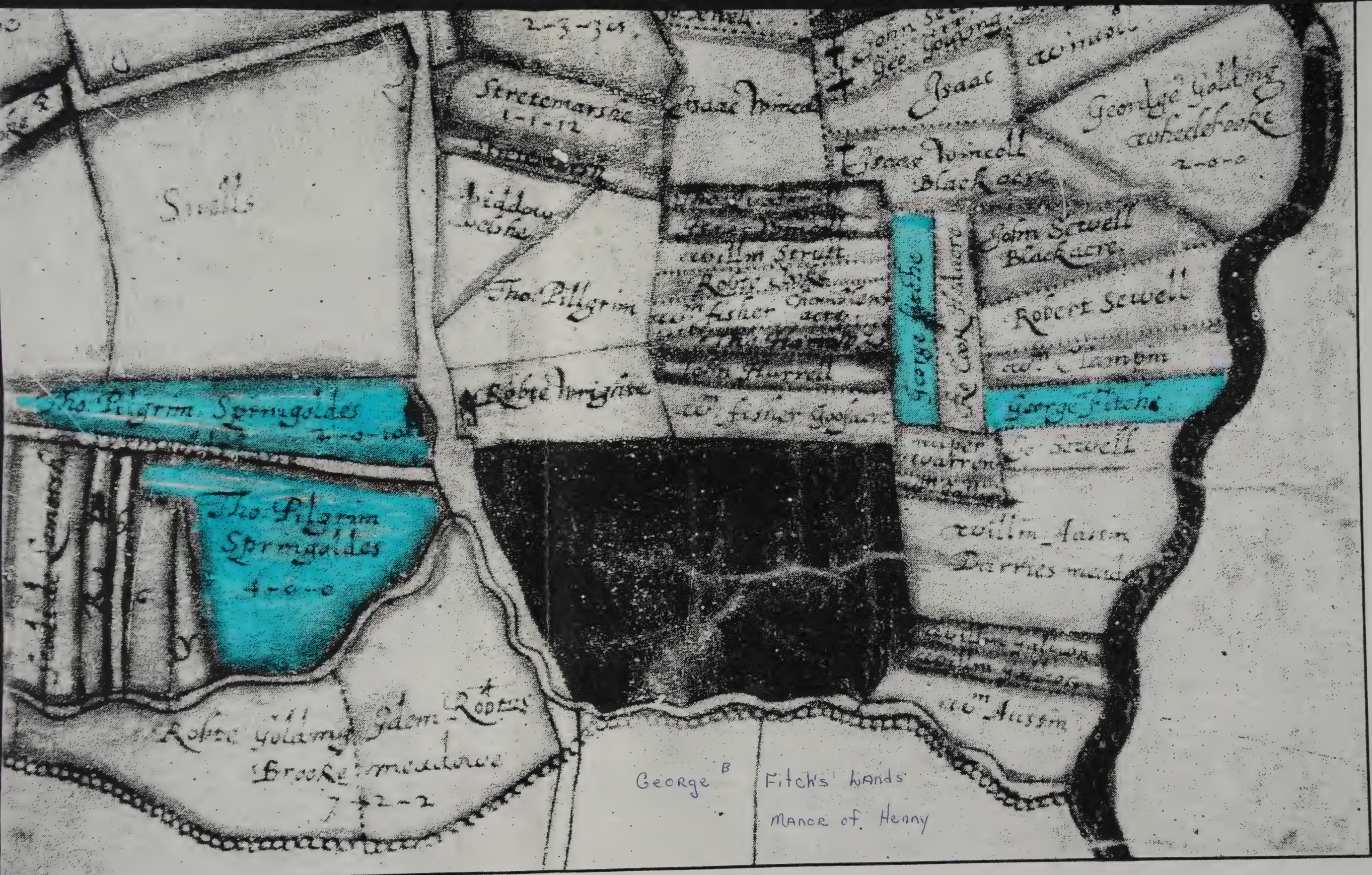


Figure 53 Detail Southeast Part of 1600 Map

- ① Robert Gernon - Lands given by Wm. the Conqueror
A Cousin
Manor of Waysbury
Stansted Montfichet, Essex Co.
A castle is there
colors not correct for people, only map
- ② William Montfichet given castle on the hill
Name was Gernon - changed to Montfichet
married Margaret, dau. of Gilbert
Second Lord of Clare
- ③ Gilbert de Montfichet
- ④ Richard - Runnymede 1225 Hertfordshire
Castle
Hertfordshire is North of London about 10 miles
- ⑤ Roger de Montfichet
- ⑥ John Fitch Fitch Castle of the North
PARRish of Widdington 1294
Possible
- ⑦ William MANOR of Widdington Lived at Wicken Bonhunt Wife's name unknown
1400 - 1464 Bought Pelworth lands probably 1 child John
- ⑧ John BORN at Wicken Bonhunt
1437 - 1468 m. Julianna about 1464
- ⑨ Thomas MARRIED Agnes Alcore (Alger) Thomas died in Lindsell
(1490) of Castle of Bensonhead Commemorated in brass at the Church of St. Mary's the Virgin
1465 - 1514 (11 children) Stained glass window
- ⑩ Roger BORN at Lindsell - died at Panfield - owned 2 houses Bocking
(half-way between Bocking + Montfichet) m. Marjorie (Margery) Hartshede, Lindsell.
-1558-9 (11 children) House in Bocking on Bredford (Bradford) St.
- ⑪ George BRAintree, Sudbury, Mercer yeoman
1545 - 1605 Will at Canterbury 1605 Goss of Edwardstone, Suffolk
(5 children) (1574) m. Joan Thurgood Elsenham, Canfield Ballingdon, Essex
m. Bridget Goss m. Joanne Taylor
- ⑫ Thomas LAND owner, cloth manufacturer Will at Canterbury
m. Ann Reeve daughter of John Reve - Gosfield
1590 - 1632 St. Mary's Church in Bocking
(11 children)
- ⑬ Thomas BORN at Bocking Came to U.S.
1612 - m. Ann Stacie Wm. Stacie, Bocking
- ⑭ James BORN at Bocking Came to U.S.
1622 -
- Brothers
- Probably went to school at Cambridge before 16



Brackling Thomas (13) clothes (14) James (10) Roger (10) of Panfield & Booking

Lat 51° 55' N

Stisted

A120 Colchester 19 km or 12 miles

Essex Way

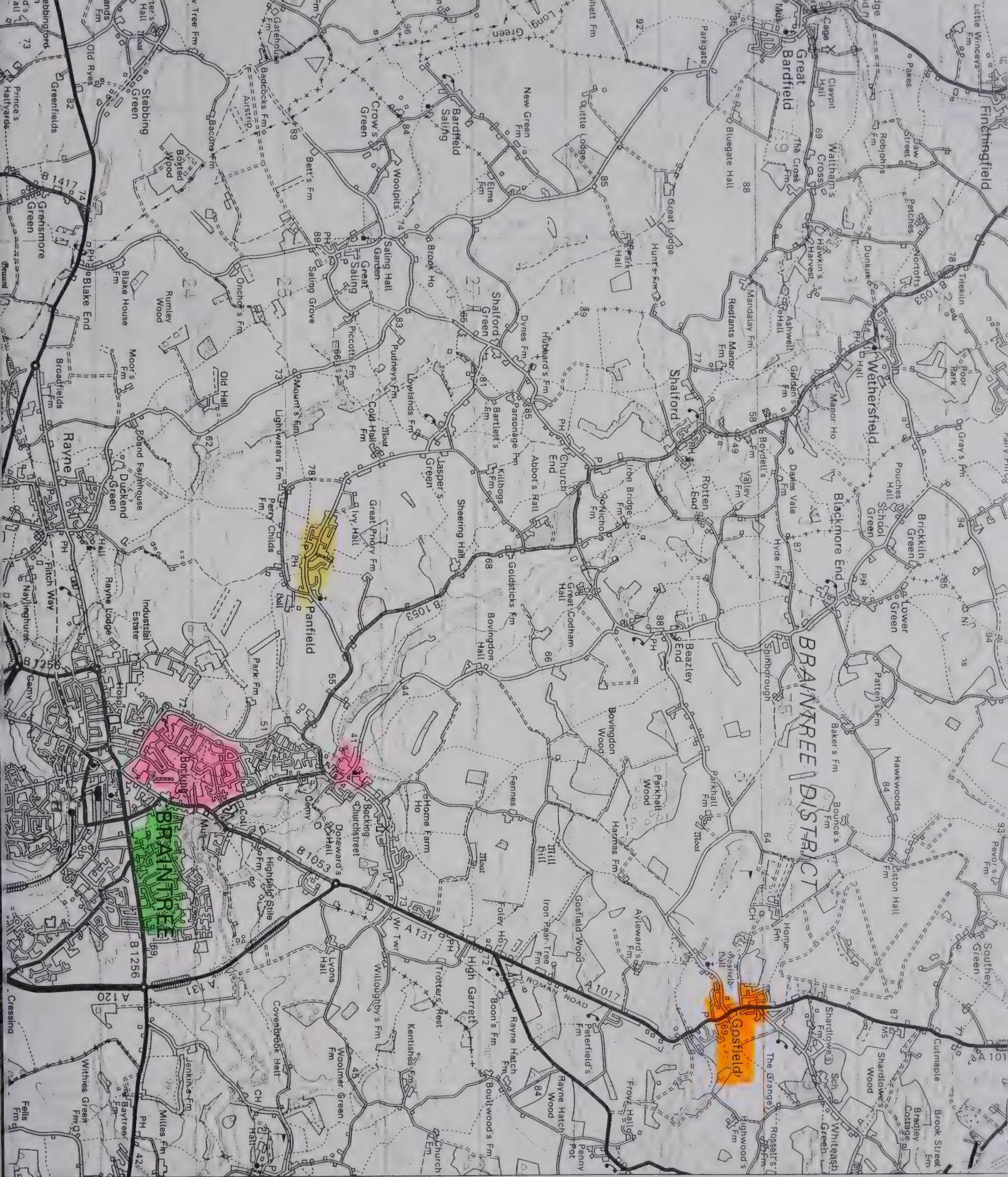
20

(10) Roger - Bocking - Panfield

(12) Thomas }
(13) Thomas } Bocking
(14) & James }

(11) Anne Reeve Gosfield (right corner)

11. George - Braintree / Bocking



3 km or 2 miles
A 604
Halstead

2 km or 1 mile
A 131
Halstead

Lat
51° 55' N

A120
Colchester
19 km or 12 miles

Bocking / Braintree
Panfield





BRAINTREE



Widdington

Henham

Elsenham

STANSTED
MOUNTFITCHET

Clavering

Berden

Manuden

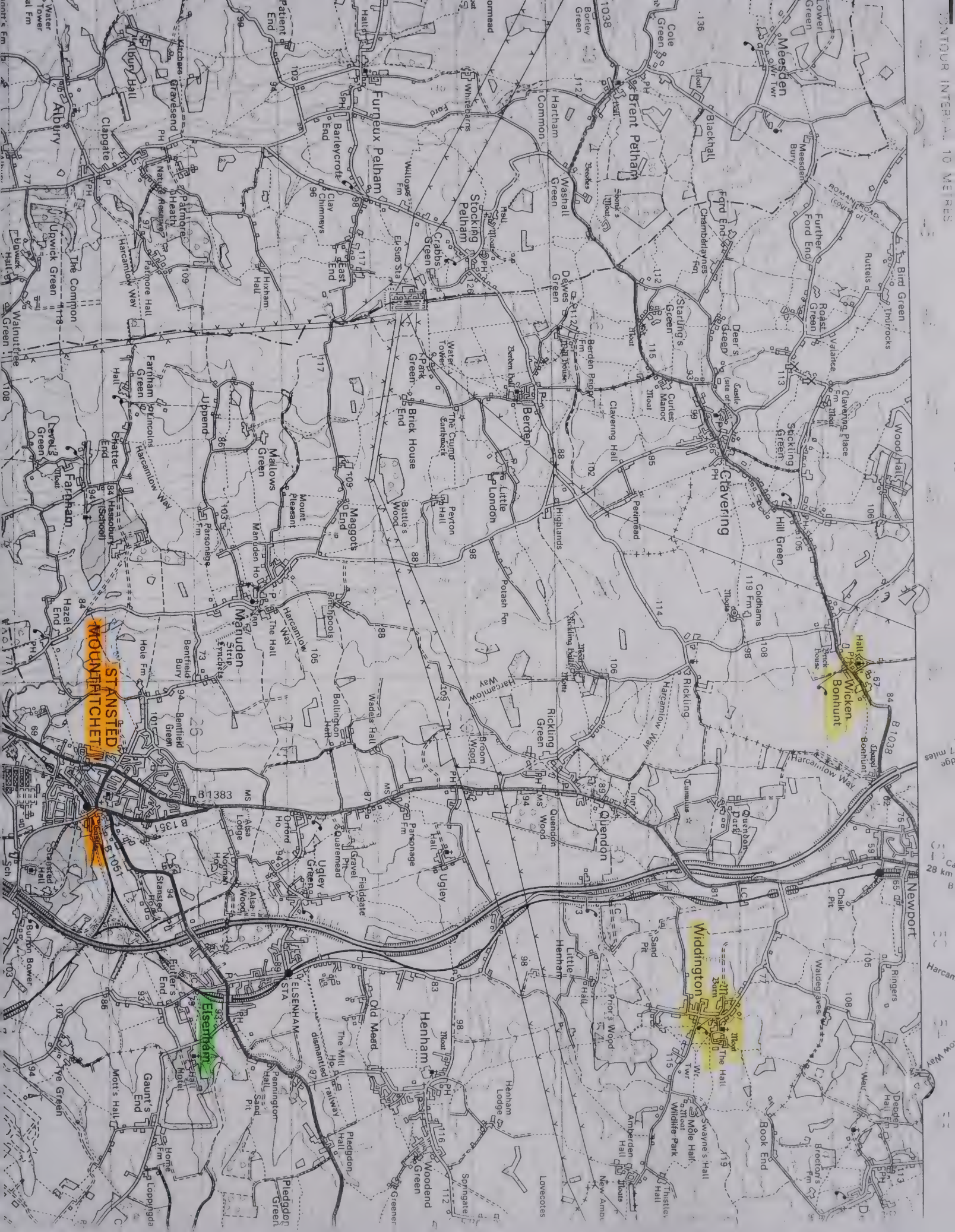
Farnham

Little
Hadham

② Robert Hermon - land given by Wm. the Conqueror
Beaumont Montfort

⑥ ⑦ Widdington - castle of the North

⑪ Eleunham - (Kilgob's Home)
Right side



Wicken Bonhunt

William (7)

John (8) - Born there

Sudbury

4

41

SU

3

40

2

39

A191

1

38

85

Wicker Bonhunt

William (7)

John (8) - Born there

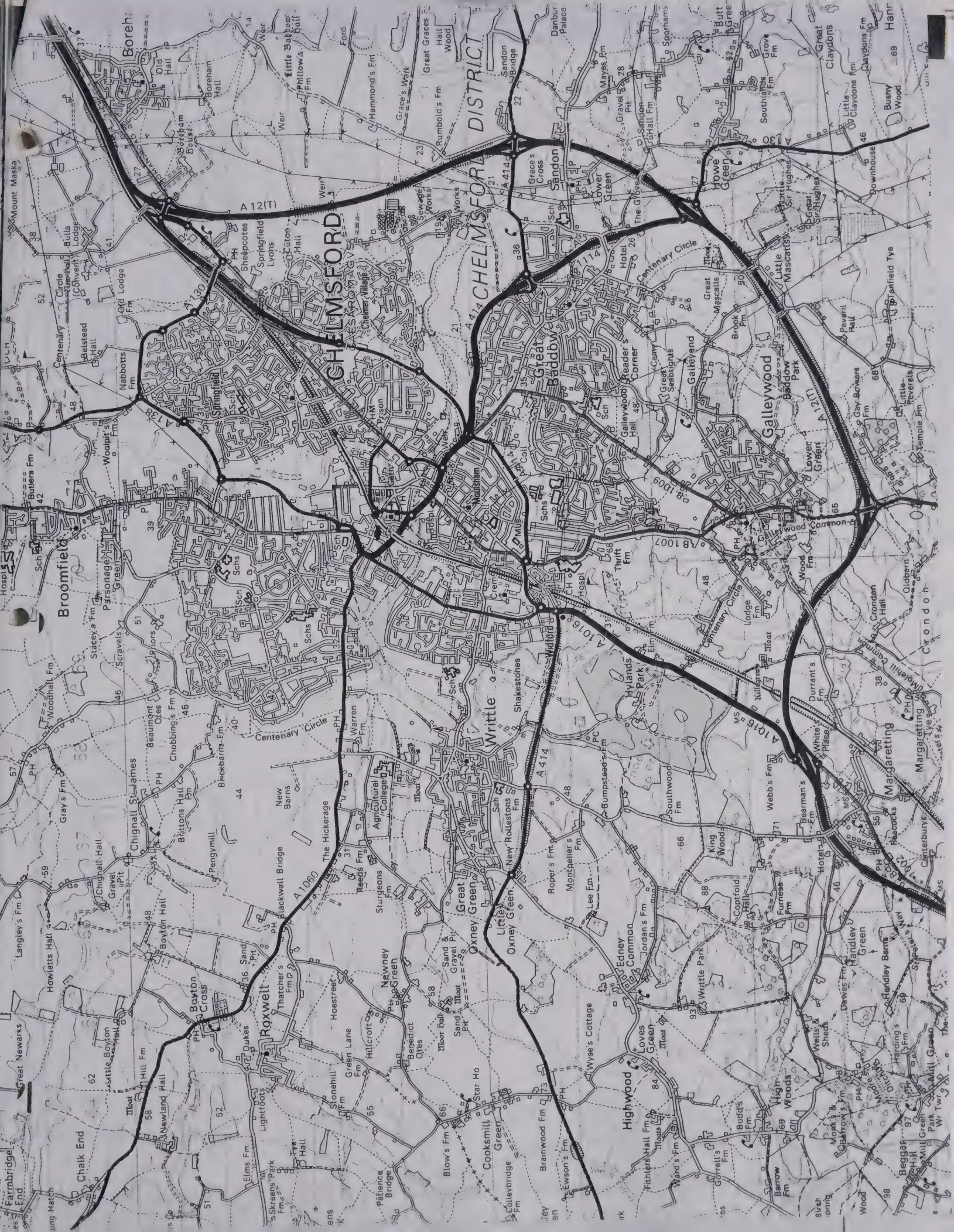
(7)



Wicker Bonhunt

⑪ George - Sullivan

⑦



①

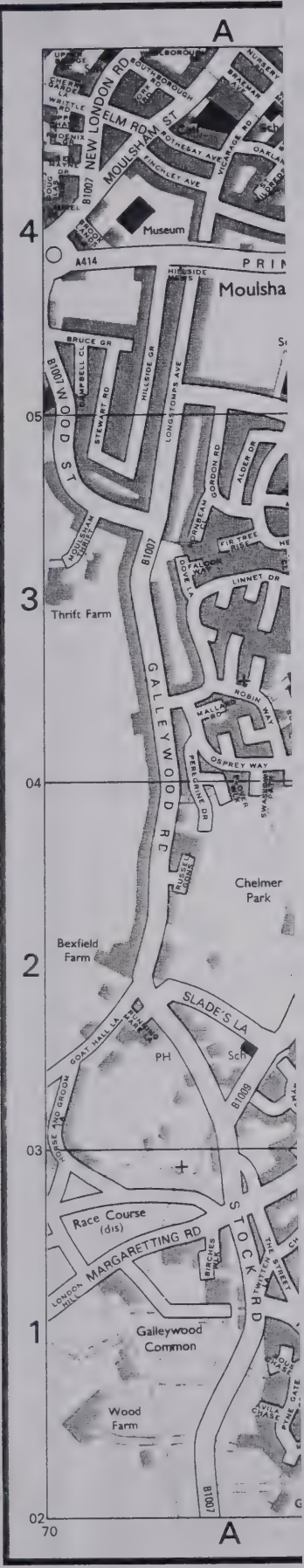
Chelmsford - where Hooker's congregation came from.

From Thomas Hooker, teaching of James Fitch in Connecticut

They went from Chelmsford to "Weston" Mass., later
Cambridge 1736

Then to Hartford, Conn., named for "Hartford" England
for Hooker's teaching pattern from James Stone

CHELMSFORD



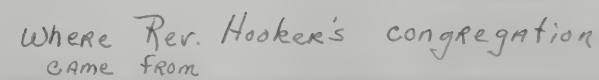
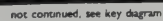
①

Chelmsford - where Hooker's congregation came from.

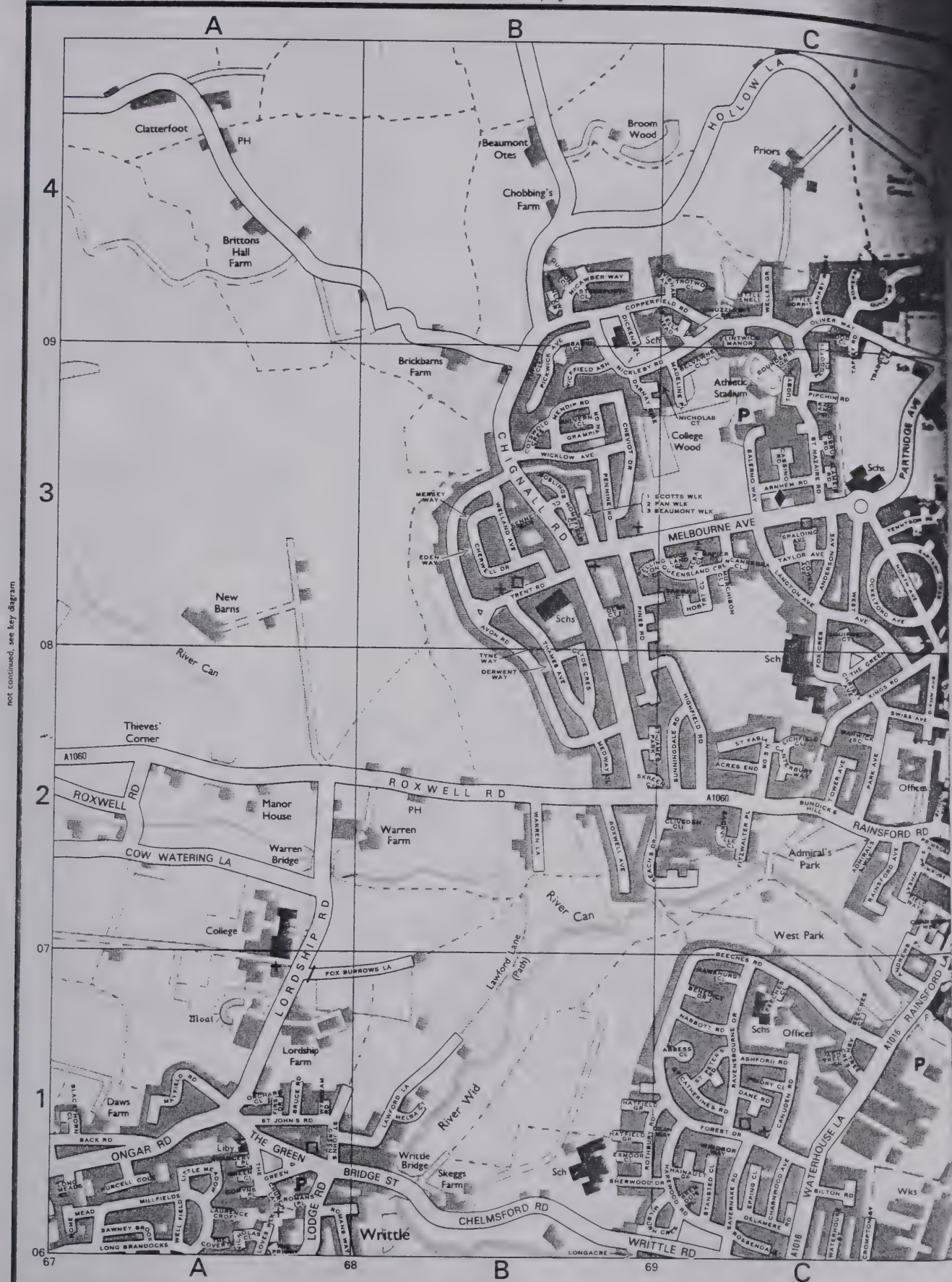
Rev. Thomas Hooker, Teacher of James Fitch in Connecticut

They went from Chelmsford to "Weston" Mass., later
Cambridge 1736

Then to Hartford, Conn., named for "Hartford" England
for Hooker's teaching pattern Rev. James Stone



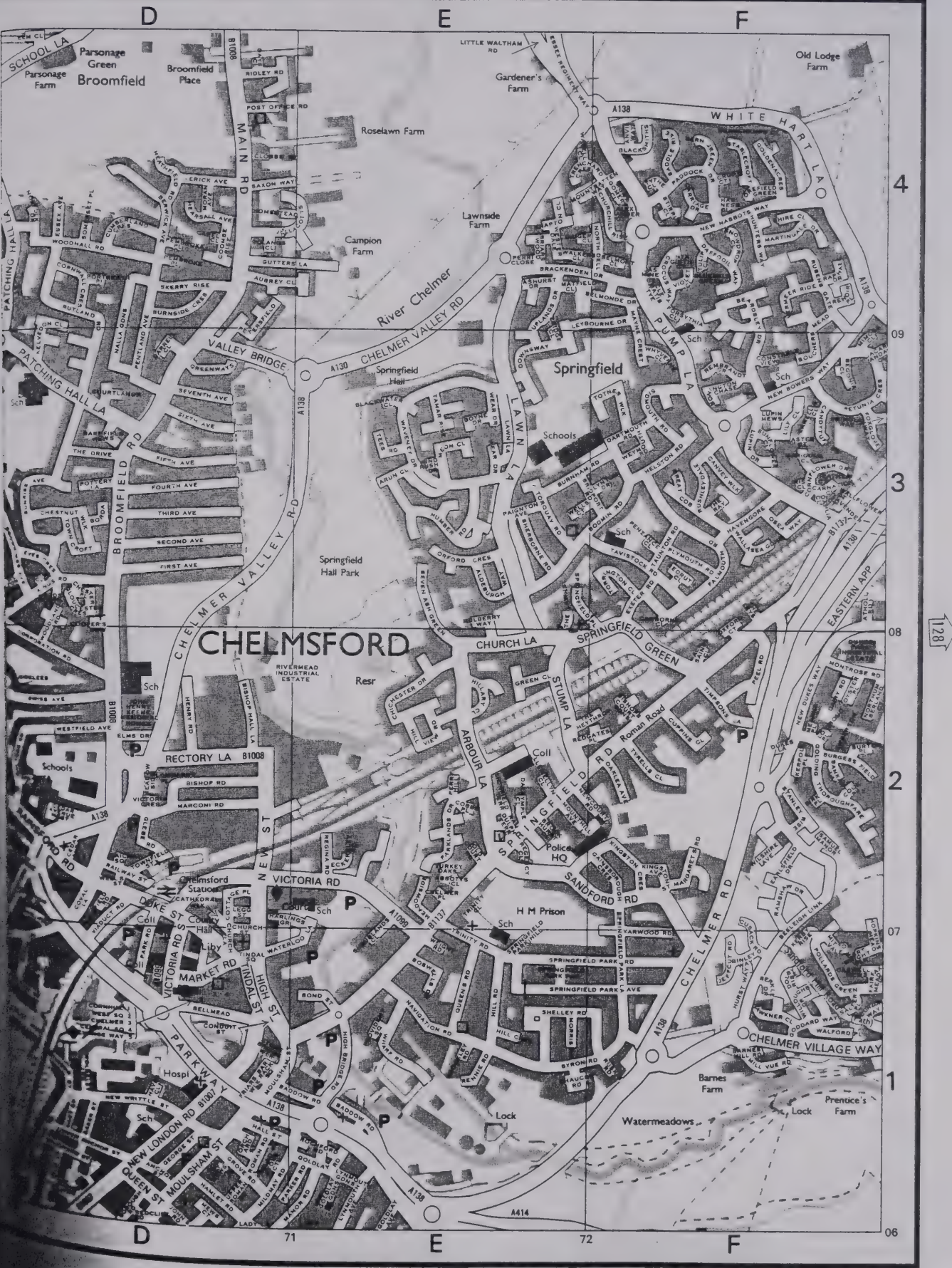




CHELMSFORD

139

not continued, see key diagram



CHELMSFORD

CHELMSFORD



CHELMSFORD

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Braintree

"**BRAINTREE** and **BOCKING**, though distinct parishes, form one continuous town, extending for a mile on the road between [Chelmsford](#) and Halstead, and the rivers Blackwater and Podsbroom, and having a united population in 1861 of 8,186.

[Kelly's Directory of Essex, 1862]

BRAINTREE is a considerable market town and parish in the hundred of Hinckford, 41 miles N. by E. from London and 12 miles N. from [Chelmsford](#)-situated on a rising ground, and connected on the north with the village of [Bocking](#), one of the most pleasant and populous in Essex. The town itself is irregularly built, most of the streets are narrow, and the general aspect indicative of an early origin: indeed the antiquity of this place is unquestionable, the site of a Roman camp being apparent close to the town."

[Pigot's Directory of Essex, 1839]

INFORMATION RELATED TO ALL OF BRAINTREE

- [Census](#)
- [Church History](#)
- [Genealogy](#)

Census

- The 1881 Census Surname Index can be viewed at the Family record centre in London and a Microfiche copy is held at Southend record office in the Southend Library, Victoria Ave, Southend.

Church History

- There is a full [Church Index](#) of Essex Churches. [NEW!](#)
- **St. Michael the Archangel.** Anglican Church
- **Congregational,**
- **Primitive Methodist, Circuit**
- **Wesleyan Methodist, Rayne Road**
- **Our Lady Queen of Peace.** Roman Catholic church

Church Records

- **St. Michael the Archangel.** Anglican Church
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Genealogy

[Essex Page](#)[Contents](#)[Essex
Towns & Parishes](#)

Bocking

"**BRAINTREE** and **BOCKING**, though distinct parishes, form one continuous town, extending for a mile on the road between [Chelmsford](#) and Halstead, and the rivers Blackwater and Podsbroom, and having a united population in 1861 of 8,186.

BOCKING, on the Pant, Freshwell, Blackwater river, on which it has several corn-mills, forms the northern part of town, consisting principally of one long street. In the time of King Etherled, the parish belonged to Etherled and Leofwin, who granted it to St. Saviour's Priory, Canterbury; it is now the property of the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy. Population in 1861 was 3,555"

[Kelly's Directory of Essex, 1862]

INFORMATION RELATED TO ALL OF BOCKING

- [Church History](#)
- [Genealogy](#)

Church History

- There is a full [Church Index](#) of Essex Churches. [NEW!](#)
- **St. Mary the Virgin.** Anglican Church
- **St. Peter's.** Anglican Church
- **Congregational Church.** [Names](#) relating to the Bocking End.

Genealogy

- [Names from a history of Braintree and Bocking](#)

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The Essex genealogy pages are maintained by [Kevin Cole](#). Last updated on 8 August 1999

- [Names from a history of Braintree and Bocking](#)

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[Essex
names](#)

Emmison's Elizabethan Life - The wills of Yeomen

[Emmison's Elizabethan Life Home, Work and Land](#) [The wills of Gentry](#)
[The wills of Merchants](#) [Disorder](#) [Morals and the Church Court](#)

=====
An index of names from :
Elizabethan Life : Wills of Essex Gentry & Yeomen
by Dr F G Emmison
=====

*Church Morals -
Fitch - indebted, afraid to
go to church 1587 pg 84
1587*

*Disorder -
Fitch - Chelmsford
Apothecary p.74*

=====

E L I Z A B E T H A N E S S E X

ESS16C4.TXT is the fourth in a series of indexes drawn from the books on Elizabethan Essex by Dr F G Emmison, former county archivist. I have written to Dr Emmison about this indexing work and have received an encouraging and helpful reply.

This index of nearly 1300 names completes the indexing of names drawn from the book "Wills of Essex Gentry & Yeomen".

My first index, drawn from "Home, Work and Land" in the same Elizabethan Essex series, included about 2300 names.

Taken together, these two books have yielded nearly 6500 names. I am then going on to index the three other books in the same series. One would hope that they will yield at least as many names again, though they may differ in character and hence in their content of names.

The population of Elizabethan Essex was around 50000, so these indexes will constitute a large sample of the total population.

All the wills quoted in this and one of Emmison's other books in the series are held by the Essex Record Office. I will make a simple index of all the names and the reference numbers for the wills to help people who may want to order them from ERO.

Mike Foster
Karori, Wellington, New Zealand
26 March 1994
=====

This index is based on pp 84/137, the wills of Yeomen. Most of the quaint Elizabethan spellings have been retained, with their final e's and their great use of y's. Where the same family name is obviously spelt variously in the one will I have sometimes standardised on one spelling.

I have tried to emphasise relationships and to indicate the names of properties as far as possible, but often the properties willed are far too numerous to include. A few people have appeared twice in different wills. I hope that my abbreviations/contractions are sufficiently obvious.

This index brings to about 4150 the number of names extracted and indexed from this volume of Elizabethan Life (in 3 indexes).

The book was borrowed from the Massey University Library.

It has been indexed by Mike Foster of Wellington, New Zealand

ABELL	William	Netteswell? Witnessed will of Andrew Fynche	96
ADAM	Anne	Harlow, dau of Jn A ygr, 20pds from Jn A's will	84
ADAM	Edward	Harlow, s of Jn A, 40pds in his will	84
ADAM	Edward ygr	Harlow, s of Jn A ygr, 30pds from Jn A's will	84
ADAM	Joan	Harlow, dau of Jn A ygr, 20pds from Jn A's will	84
ADAM	Joan	Harlow, w of Jn A, 20/- pa for life + her keep	84
ADAM	John elder	Harlow, Hubbards Hall, ymn, will 1591 proved 1593	84
ADAM	John ygr	Harlow, s of Jn A, residue of land/goods	84
ADAM	John ygst	Harlow, s of Jn A ygr, 40pds from Jn A's will	84
ADAM	Nicholas	Witness/scribe of will of Wm Fitch of Gt Sampford	124
ADAM	William	Walden draper, supervisor of will Thos Harrison	127
ADAM	William	Harlow, s of Jn A ygr, 30pds from Jn A's will	84
ADAM	William	Overseer of will of Jn Bearde, 20/- gift	88
ADAMS	Anne	dau of Anne Barratt, 20/- in will of Jn B at 18	87
ADAMS	John	s of Anne Barratt, 20/- in will of Jn B at 18	87
ALBART	Rachel	Braintree, prior d of Joan Man, 5pds &c from Richd	131
ALBERTE	Thomas eld	Felsted, supervisor for George Boote, 6/8d to him	116
ALIE	John	Harlow ? 20/- from Geo Derrington's will	123
ALLAM	Edmund	marr Grace Gates, br-i-law of Wm Gates	96
ALLAM	Grace	sis of Wm Gates of Paglesham	96
ALLAM	John	Witnessed will of Matthew Barnarde of Aythorpe R	86
ALLAM	John	Witness/writer of will of Thos Aylett 1602	85
ALLAM	Thomas	br-i-law of Wm Gates, to occupy West Hall farm	96
ALLEN	Elizabeth	Virley, dau of Thos, a share of his goods	114
ALLEN	James	Virley ? Witnessed will of Thos Allen 1602	115
ALLEN	Joan	Virley, dau of Thos, a share of his goods	114
ALLEN	John	ex svt of Jn Brett of Tolleshunt Major, 3/4d	118
ALLEN	Margaret	Virley, dau of Thos, a share of his goods	114
ALLEN	Mary	Virley, dau of Thos, a share of his goods	114
ALLEN	Sarah	Virley, dau of Thos, a share of his goods	114
ALLEN	Thomas	Virley ymn, will of 1602	114
ALLEN	Thomas	Walton, sale of Dedham copyholds to Jn Brett (TM)	118
ALLEN	Thomas jnr	Virley, s of Thos, lands in Heybridge & Dedham	114
ALLET	Andrew	Netteswell, svt of Andrew Fynche, cow + 10/-	95
ALLIN	Simon	Mountnessing? Witnessed will of Robt Pascall	102
ALLISON	Dorothy	Coggeshall, 6/8d in will of Jn Armonde	115
ANDREWES	George	E Colne, svt of Wm Stamer, 2 nobles in his will	136
ANNIS	John	Sible Hednghm, witnessed will of Edwd Riche 1594	104
APLETON	Agnes	Cousin of Wm Hulke, 5/- in his will	107
ARCHER	Henry	Horndon ? 40/- in will of Robt Veare	137
ARCHER	Percy	Horndon ? Overseer of will of Robt Veare	137
ARCHER	Robert	Barnston ? Witnessed will of Christopher Scott	113
ARMENT	Robert	Netteswell, svt of Andrew Fynche, 6/8d in his will	95
ARMONDE	Ellen	Witham, w of Jn, Machins Mill lease + meadow/kine	115
ARMONDE	George	Witham, s of Jn, Spread Eagle & in Witham	115
ARMONDE	John	Witham, Spread Eagle, will of 1600	115
ARMONDE	Margaret	marr Richd Brodwaye, silver/bedding from Jn A	115
ARMONDE	Mary	d of Jn Armonde, marr Richd Brodwaye, d pre-1600	115
ARMUNDE	Robert	Witham cutler, 6/8d in will of Jn Armonde	115
ARSTLYN	John	Canewdon ? Witnessed will of Jn Barratt 1574	87
ARUDELL	William	Witness/writer of will of Francis Booseye 1598	116
ARUNDELL	William	Widford ? Writer/witness of will of Wm Hayes 1583	107
AUGER	Thomas	Sold Nokes in Laindon to Jn Lake	111
AWDELEY	Beatrice	Gt Stanway, w of Thos, executrix of his will	104
AWDELEY	Elizabeth	dau of Thos, marr Richard Hasset, 3pds pa willed	104
AWDELEY	Francis	Gt Stanway, s of Thos, 3pd pa to be pd by Thos ygr	104
AWDELEY	George	Gt Stanway, s of Thos, 3pd pa to be pd by Thos ygr	104
AWDELEY	John	Bro of Thos Awdeley of Gt Stanway, exctr of will	104
AWDELEY	John	Gt Stanway, s of Thos, 3pd pa to be pd by Thos ygr	104
AWDELEY	Katherine	sis of Thos, witnessed his will 1584	104
AWDELEY	Mary	Gt Stanway, d of Thos, 3pd pa to be pd by Thos ygr	104
AWDELEY	Richard	Gt Stanway, s of Thos, 3pd pa to be pd by Thos ygr	104

AWDELEY	Thomas	Gt Stanway, Gosbekes, short will 1584 proved 1585	104
AWDELEY	Thomas ygr	Gt Stanway, eld s of Thos, Gosbekes in will	104
AYLET	George	s of Thos Aylet, named in will of Matt Barnarde	85
AYLET	George	Lease of Swan Inn Dunmow for 7y from Thos Pavyet	102
AYLET	Henry	s of Thos Aylet, lands @21 from Matthew Barnarde	85
AYLET	Joan	d of Thos A, 20 acres at 18 from Matthew Barnarde	85
AYLET	Joan	wife of Geo, 20pds in will of Thos Pavyet	102
AYLET	John	s of Thos, Porters/Mellers in will of Mat Barnarde	85
AYLET	Marion	d of Thos, successor to Joan in Mat Barnarde will	85
AYLET	Mary	d of Thos, successor to Joan in Mat Barnarde will	85
AYLET	Robert	s of Thos, Porters/Mellers in will of Mat Barnarde	85
AYLET	Thomas	Aythorpe, s-i-law of Matt Barnarde	85
AYLET	Thomas	Leaden Hall, supervisor in will of Matt Barnarde	85
AYLET	William	Rivenhall, owed 40/- to Thos Porter, Mountnessing	134
AYLETT	Anne	dau (decd) of Jn Brett of Tolleshunt Major	117
AYLETT	Anne ygr	d of Anne, Bakers in Toll D'Arcy fm Jn Brett (TM)	117
AYLETT	George	Leaden Roothing, s of Thos, Shrubbess (Htfd Bd Oak)	85
AYLETT	Humphrey	Lead Roothing, s of Thos, Chalkes, Leaden Hall, &c	84
AYLETT	John	Leaden Roothing, s of Thos, manor of Stock Hall	84
AYLETT	Katherine	Leaden Roothing, w of Thos, 20pds + 3pds/qr + etc	84
AYLETT	Mary	d of Anne, 200pds fm Jn Brett to buy a property	117
AYLETT	Rebecca	d of Anne, Rowlands/Ayers fm Jn Brett of Toll Maj	117
AYLETT	Rose	Leaden Roothing, d of Thos, 8pds pa x Keeres manor	85
AYLETT	Susan	d of Anne, several pties fm Jn Brett of Toll.Major	117
AYLETT	Thomas eld	Leaden Roothing ymn, will 1602	84
AYLETT	William	s-i-law of Jn Brett of Tolleshunt Major, exectr	118
BACHELER	John	Sold Woolpack in Chelmsford to Jn Brette	91
BAKER	Elizabeth	Matching, svt of Thos King, qr of barley in will	108
BAKER	George	Rawreth ? Witnessed will of Richd Hayes 1590	99
BAKER	Joan	Stock, dau of Hy Harkewood, 3 kine > chn	106
BAKER	John	Cousin of Jn Brette of Broomfield, 20/- in will	90
BAKER	Richard	Rayleigh, tenant (Wards) of Nich Brodwater	121
BAKER	Richard	Stock, marr Joan Harkewood	106
BAKER	Richard	Halstead ? Supervisor/witness, will of Jn Harvie	98
BAKER	Thomas	Cousin of Jn Brette of Broomfield, agent in will	91
BALDWYNE	Richard	Hornchurch, decd. 10/- to his wife fm Wm Hearde	128
BALLARD	George	Moulsham ? Supervisor of will of Geo Bowcer	117
BARBOR	John	Netteswell, svt of Andrew Fynche, 6/8d in his will	95
BARKER	Charles	Gt Parndon, svt of Jn Brette, 1 seam of barley	90
BARNARD	John	Witnessed the will of Jn Brett elder 1593	120
BARNARD	William	Writer/witness of will of Clement Buck, Manuden	92
BARNARDE	Henry	High Roothing, cousin of Matt Barnarde, residue	85
BARNARDE	Joan	Aythorpe, w of Matt, h'hold tools @ Aythorpe Hall	85
BARNARDE	Matthew	Aythorpe Roothing ymn, will 1600 proved 1603	85
BARNARDE	Thomas	High Roothing smith, cousin of Matt Barnarde, 3pds	85
BARNARDE	William	High Roothing, cousin of Matt Barnarde, residue	85
BARNERD	Thomas	Witness/writer of will of Jn Adam of Harlow 1591	84
BARRATT	Anne	Canewdon, w of Jn, Canewdon Hall for life + stock	86
BARRATT	Anne	Canewdon, d of Jn, 20pds + sundry pewter etc	86
BARRATT	Edward	Esq, sold Rainham land to Wm Hearde	128
BARRATT	Elizabeth	Canewdon, d of Jn, 20pds + sundry pewter etc	86
BARRATT	Jane	Canewdon, d of Jn, 20pds @21 + sundry furniture &c	86
BARRATT	Joan	Canewdon, d of Jn, 20pds @21 + sundry furniture &c	86
BARRATT	John	Canewdon ymn, will 1574	86
BARRATT	Robert	Canewdon, 2nd s of Jn, Scarpes & Scaldottes &c	86
BARRATT	William	Canewdon, s of Jn, Canewdon Hall after d of Anne	86
BARRETT	Anthony	s in law of Joan Foote of Wivenhoe	124
BARRETT	Joan	dau of Anthony, 5pds in will of Hy Foote, Wivenhoe	124
BARTLETT	Augustine	s of Hy Bartlett, 5pds in will of Jn Bartlett @21	87
BARTLETT	Henry	Nephew of Jn B, 5pds in his will	87
BARTLETT	John	Eastwood ymn, will of 1581	87
BARTLETT	Michael	Given 5pds at 21 in the will of Jn Bartlett	88
BARTLETT	Robert	Nephew of Jn, recd lease of W Barrow Hall in will	87
BATEMAN	Anthony	Rainham ? Cloak cloth in will of Wm Hearde	128

BATEMAN	William	Rainham ? Godson of Wm Hearde, 20/- in his will	128
BATMAN		Cousin of Jn Barratt, 10/- in his will	87
BATMAN	Margaret	God-daughter of Jn Barratt, lamb in his will	87
BATSON	Richard	Felsted, witnessed the will of Geo Boote 1568	116
BATTLE	John	Eastwood, neighbour of Jn Bartlett, supervisor	88
BAVESLEY	William	Paglesham ? Overseer of will of Wm Gates	96
BAYLYE	Richard	Gt Sampford, aka Richd Smyth	135
BAYLYE	Thomas	Lt Sampford, witnessed will of Thos Morgan	133
BEARDE	Agnes	sis of Jn B, married a Fuller	88
BEARDE	Alice	Gt Parndon, w of Jn, h'hold goods/linen	88
BEARDE	Basil	Gt Parndon, eld s of Jn, 60pds in his will	88
BEARDE	Benet	sis of Jn B, married with chn, 2/6 ea in Jn's will	88
BEARDE	Clemence	sis of Jn B, married with chn, 2/6 ea in Jn's will	88
BEARDE	Clemence	Mother of Jn B, named in his will	88
BEARDE	James	Gt Parndon, ygr s of Jn, share in Taylfriers manor	88
BEARDE	Joan	sis of Jn B, married with chn, 2/6 ea in Jn's will	88
BEARDE	John	Gt Parndon ymn, will Apr 1602, proved May	88
BEARDE	Mary	sis of Jn B, married with chn, 2/6 ea in Jn's will	88
BEARDE	William	Gt Parndon, ygr s of Jn, share in Taylfriers manor	88
BECHER	James	E Tilbury ? Witness of will of Robt Bretton	106
BEDWELL	Elizabeth	Eastwood, svt of Jn Bartlett, 40/- in his will	87
BELL	John	Mountnessing? Witnessed will of Robt Pascall	102
BENDYSH	John	Bumpstead gmn, land deal with Thos Fytche	126
BENSON	Henry	Witham? Tenant of Jn Armonde, given 3mos rent-free	115
BENTLEY	Edward	Gt Burstead, s of Jn, ring/books/silver/chest &c	105
BENTLEY	George	Gt Burstead, s of Jn, ring/chest/books/maps/silver	105
BENTLEY	John	Gt Burstead, svt of Sir Jn Peter, will 1596	105
BENTLEY	Mary	Gt Burstead, w of Jn, lease of Blunt Walls farm	105
BENTLEY	Mary ygr	Gt Burstead, ygst d of Jn, a great joined chest	105
BENTLEY	Robert	bro of Jn Bentley, cloak & old ring willed to him	105
BEN(S)	Andrew	Recd 6/8d in the will of Andrew Fynche	95
BERDE	William	Proved the will of Jn Bearde of Gt Parndon	88
BERIFF	Richard	Sold Gt Totham properties to Thos Sammes elder	112
BERNARD	Bartholomew	Debden, s of John, 50pds at age 21	89
BERNARD	Isaac	Bro of Jn Bernard (?), exectr of his will	89
BERNARD	John	Debden ymn (manor of Deanes), will 1584	89
BERNARD	Margaret	Debden, dau of John, 20pds at age 21	89
BERNARD	Phillip(a)	Debden, dau of John, 20pds at age 21	89
BERNARD	Richard	Debden, eld s of John, Deanes at 21	89
BERNARD	Richard ygr	Debden, 2nd s of Jn, share of estate residue	89
BERNARD	Thomas	Debden, s of John, 50pds at age 21	89
BERNARDE	Nathaniel	Bro of Jn Bernard (?), exectr of his will	89
BERNARDE	Thomas	Bro of Jn Bernard, exectr of his will	89
BERYMAN	John	Felsted clerk/schmstr, witnessed will of Geo Bootell	116
BEVYS	Agnes	Gt Parndon, d of Jn, given Westes in Harlow	89
BEVYS	Alice	Gt Parndon, d of Jn, part share in residue	89
BEVYS	George	Gt Parndon, eld s of Jn, Richd Snowe's tenement &c	89
BEVYS	John	Gt Parndon ymn, will 1572 proved 1573	89
BEVYS	John jnr	Gt Parndon, s of Jn, Maidemore/Passmers/Sharpshawe	89
BEVYS	Margaret	Gt Parndon, wife (2nd ?) of Jn, land etc for life	89
BEVYS	Mary	Gt Parndon, d of Jn, part share in residue	89
BIATT	James	Witham? Tenant of Jn Armonde, given 3mos rent-free	115
BIRD	Robert	Gt Totham, svt of Thos Sammes eld, 1 cow + 5/-	113
BLAKESLEYE	Isabel	Netteswell, svt of Andrew Fynche, 3/4d in his will	95
BLETHIN	Randall	Netteswell? Witnessed/wrote will of Andrew Fynche	96
BODE	Edward	Overseer of will of Jn Barratt, 10/- in his will	87
BODE	Henry	Rayleigh ? Witnessed will of Nicholas Brodwater	121
BODE	John	s of William B, 13/4d in will of Thos Collen	93
BODE	Judith	sis of Thos Collen, given 3pds in his will	93
BODE	Susan	dau of William B, 13/4d in will of Thos Collen	93
BODE	William	Prob hsbd of Judith Bode	93
BOND	father	Tolleshunt D'Arcy, 2/6d from Jn Brett of T Maj.	117
BOODE	Edward	Gmn, bro of Mary Collen, witnessed will of Thos C	94
BOODE	father	Tolleshunt D'Arcy, 4/- from Jn Brett elder	119

BOODE	Francis	Godson of Thos Collen, 10/- in his will	93
BOODE	William	Gmn, witnessed will of Thos Collen 1584	94
BOONDOCKE	John	br-i-law of Wm Stamer, overseer of will, 20/-	136
BOOSEYE	Abraham	Chignall, s of Francis, Moulsham tenements at 21	116
BOOSEYE	Agnes	Chignall, w of Francis, board/lodging for life	116
BOOSEYE	Edward	Bro of Francis B of Chignall St James, overseer	116
BOOSEYE	Edward jr	Chignall, s of Francis, 20pds at 25 in his will	116
BOOSEYE	Francis	Chignall St James ymn, will July 1598 proved Aug	116
BOOSEYE	Francis jr	Chignall, s of Francis, tenements in Moulsham	116
BOOSEYE	Isaac	Chignall, s of Francis, 40pds at 25 in his will	116
BOOSEYE	John eld	Kinsman of Francis Booseye, will overseer	116
BOOSEYE	Thomas	Chignall, s of Francis, Newlands/Jaggons/Fletchers	116
BOOSEYE	William	Chignall, s of Francis, Kings Head in Moulsham	116
BOOTE	Agnes	Felsted, w of George, residue of goods &c	116
BOOTE	George	Felsted ymn, will 1568, no probate	116
BOOTE	John	Felsted, s of George, 10pds at 18 in will	116
BOOTE	Ralph	Felsted, eld s of George, 10pds at 18 in will	116
BOOTE	unborn	Felsted, unborn ch of George, 10pds at 18 in will	116
BOOTE	William	Felsted, s of George, 10pds at 18 in will	116
BOROWE	William	Witham? Tenant of Jn Armonde, given 3mos rent-free	115
BOUGHTTELL	Thomas	Danbury, to care for Phoebe Hayes till age 18	98
BOWCER	Edward	Moulsham, s of Geo, sword/buckler &c post-appr'shp	116
BOWCER	George	Moulsham ymn, will of Nov 1593 proved Jan 1594	116
BOWCER	George jr	Moulsham, s of Geo, sword/dagger at 21	116
BOWCER	Helen	Moulsham, w of Geo, residue in his will	117
BOWCER	William	Moulsham, s of Geo, dagger at 21	116
BOWLES	Thomas	Rainham, svt of Wm Hearde	128
BOWLES	Thomas jr	Rainham, s of Thos, 1 noble in will of Wm Hearde	128
BOWSEY	Ellen	Ingatestone, d of Jn Byrde, cauldron/dishes &c	121
BOWSEY	James	s-i-law of Jn Byrde of Ingatestone, executor	121
BOWTELL	John	Thaxted, sold land to Richd Smyth of Gt Sampford	135
BOWTELL	Thomas	Stock, witnessed will addendum by Hy Harkewood	106
BOWTELL	Thomas	Thaxted, sold land to Richd Smyth of Gt Sampford	135
BOWTILL	William	Gt Sampford, land bordered Richd Smyth's land	135
BOWYER	Joan	marr dau of Thos Lake, 5pds in his will	100
BOYES	Robert	Halstead ? Witnessed will of Jn Pilgryme	103
BRADDE	Thomas	csn of Hy Foote of Wivenhoe, 10/- in his will	125
BRADLYE	Katherine	sis of Hy Foote of Wivenhoe, 10pds > her chn	124
BRAGG	William	Sible Hdngm, sold Rye Mead land >Thos Harrington	97
BRANGWYN	Robert	Painter, overseer of will of Geo Derrington	123
BRAYNEWODDE		Witness, will of Richd Longe Chlmsfd	101
BRAYWOOD	Margery	Broomfield, svt of Jn Brette, 3/4d in his will	90
BREDGE	John	Harlow ? Overseer of will of Geo Derrington	123
BRERETON	Francis	s-i-law of Thos Porter, overseer of his will	134
BRETT		sis of Richd Man of B'tree, 2 angels, 1 bullock	132
BRETT	Alice	Beeleigh, s of Thos, 100pds + bed at 21	120
BRETT	Giles	Bro of Jn Brett of Tolleshunt	117
BRETT	Giles	Bro of Jn Brett elder of Tollesbury	119
BRETT	Henry	kinsman of Jn Brett of Tolleshunt Major	118
BRETT	James	Beeleigh, s of Thos, 100pds + bed at 21	120
BRETT	Joan	Cousin of Jn Brette of Broomfield, 5/- in his will	90
BRETT	Joan	Beeleigh, w of Thos, farm stock, residue	120
BRETT	Joan	Lt Totham, widowed dau of Thos Hatcheman, legatee	98
BRETT	Joan	dau of widow Brett, lamb in will of Jn Barratt	87
BRETT	John	Beeleigh, s of Thos, given Beeleigh Mills	120
BRETT	John	bro of Jn Brett of Tolleshunt Major, gold angel	118
BRETT	John	Tolleshunt Major ymn, will 1592 (v other Bretts)	117
BRETT	John elder	Tollesbury ymn, related to Jn B of Tolleshunt Maj	119
BRETT	John jr	Tollesbury, s of Jn (2), 10pds fm Jn B Elder	119
BRETT	John jr	s of Giles, nephew of Jn of Tolleshunt, a gown	117
BRETT	John (2)	Tollesbury, csu of Jn B elder	119
BRETT	Judith	d of Anne, Bredcrofts E Colne fm Jn Brett (T Maj)	117
BRETT	Maryon	d of Jn of Toll. Major, marr Sammes	117
BRETT	Susan	Tollesbury, dau of Jn (2), 10pds fm Jn B Elder	119

COCK	William	Witnessed the will of Jn Brett elder 1593	120
COCKE	Agnes	Harlow, sis of Margt, 5pds from Geo Derrington	123
COCKE	George	br of Thos, 10/- in will of Geo Derrington	123
COCKE	George	Harlow, br of Margt, 5pds from Geo Derrington	123
COCKE	John	Brentwood baker, br of Thos, 2pd fm Geo Derrington	123
COCKE	John	Moze ? Witnessed will of Thomas Galawaye 1572	96
COCKE	Margaret	Harlow, svt of Geo Derrington, 10pds in his will	123
COCKE	Sarah	Harlow, sis of Margt, 5pds from Geo Derrington	123
COCKE	Thomas	S Weald ymn, bro of Geo Derrington, 5pds in will	122
COCKER		Fobbing, svt of Wm Hulke, given hose + frize coat	107
COCKES	Verissimus	Given 1 bed in will of Hy Foote of Wivenhoe	125
COGGESHALL	John	Halstead gmn, witnessed will of Thos Harrington	97
COKER	Joan	Maldon, 6/8d in the will of Jn Bartlett	88
COKER	John	s of Joan (?), 3/4d in will of Jn Bartlett	88
COKER	Robert	s of Joan (?), 3/4d in will of Jn Bartlett	88
COLE	Edward	Braintree, will supervisor for Richd Man	133
COLE	Martin	Langham ? Witnessed will of Wm Constabell 1603	122
COLLEN	Audrey	Sis of Thos Collen, 10/- in his will	93
COLLEN	Joan	Rochford, dau of Thos, age 1 on 15/3/1585, 400pds	94
COLLEN	John	Only s of Thos, age 5 1584, 1/3 of manor &c &c	93
COLLEN	John	Bro of Thos Collen, 10/- to his wife in his will	93
COLLEN	Mary	Rochford, w of Thos, Jackherdes for life &c	94
COLLEN	Mary	Rochford, dau of Thos, age 2 on 14/3/1585, 400pds	94
COLLEN	Nicholas	Bro of Thos Collen, 10/- to his wife in his will	93
COLLEN	Thomas	Rochford ymn, will Jun 1584 proved Jly, died young	93
COLTHERST	Edward	Mount'nsg? Witnessed will of Thos Porter 1577	134
COLTHERST	Edward eld	Ingatestone ? Overseer of will of Jn Byrde	121
CONSTABELL	Elizabeth	Langham, dau of Wm, share of Edwardstone ho at 21	122
CONSTABELL	Joan	Langham, w of Wm, "all his goods", executrix	122
CONSTABELL	Sarah	Langham, son of Wm, share of Edwardstone ho at 21	122
CONSTABELL	William	Langham ymn, brief nunc will 1603	122
CONSTABELL	William jr	Langham, son of Wm, share of Edwardstone ho at 21	122
COOKE	George	Lt Dunmow ? Witnessed will of Jn Raymonde 1560	112
COOKE	John	Gmn, witnessed will of Thos Collen 1584	94
COOKE	Thomas	Wivenhoe ? Witnessed will of Hy Foote 1595	125
COOLE	Anne	sis of Margt Chamberlain, 5pds fm Thos Harrison	127
COOPER		Rayleigh, leased house 2lyrs fm Jn Lake (7pds/a)	111
CORNWELL	John	Lt Totham ? Witnessed will of Thos Hatcheman	98
COSSENES	William	Sible Hedngm, witnessed will of Edwd Riche 1594	104
COTTON	Thomas	s-i-law of Richd Man (which dau?), 20/- at 22	131
COTTYS	Jane	Witham, svt of Jn Armonde, 3pds in his will	115
COWLEY	John	Rainham, svt of Wm Hearde, cloak cloth in will	128
CRABTREE	Mary	sis of Hy Foote of Wivenhoe, 10pds > her chn	124
CRAFFORD	John	London ? Witnessed will of Geo Derrington 1574	124
CREAKE	widow	Tolleshunt Major, life accom fm Jn Brett of T Maj	117
CRODER	William	Given 20/- in will of Geo Derrington of Harlow	122
CROFTE	James	Thaxted ? Wrote/witnessed will of Richd Smyth	136
CROFTE	James	Walden notary, silver harness from Thos Harrison	127
CROSSE	Thomas	s of Agnes Poole, 2 ewes in will of Thos Hatcheman	98
CROWE	John	Gt Baddow, 2 sheep/child from Hy Harkewood's will	106
CROWE	Katherine	Broomfield, svt of Jn Brette, 3/4d in his will	90
CURCHAN		dau of Wm Kinge, 6/8d to each child in will	109
CURLE	John	s-i-law of Thos Lake, 17pd debt forgiven in will	100
CURLE	Mary	dau of Jn Curle, 40/- in will of Thos Lake	100
CURTIS	Thomas	Chingford tenant of Thos Lake	100
CUTTE	Richard	Debden esq, leased 1/2 Matching Hall > Thos King	108
DALE	Audrey	E Han'fd, w of Matthew, Pett Croft & residue	94
DALE	Joan	mother of Matt, 20/- in his will	94
DALE	Matthew	E Hanningfield ymn, Gt Greenwoods/Stock, will 1586	94
DALE	Matthew jr	E Han'fd, s of Matthew, Charvells + other crofts	94
DALE	Richard	E Han'fd, s of Matthew, Gt Greenwoods + 3 pties	94
DAMMYNE	John	s of Robt, given 3pds 6/8d in will of Jn Bartlett	87
DAMMYNE	Margaret	d of Robt, given 3pds 6/8d in will of Jn Bartlett	87
DAMMYNE	Robert	Given 6pds 13/4d + featherbed in Jn Bartlett will	87

DAMYN	William	Owed 4pds 14/- by Wm Hulke of Fobbing	107
DAWSON	Agnes	dau of Jn Hills, marr Jn Dawson, 10pds fm Jn Hills	129
DAWSON	John	s-i-law of Jn Hills of Ingatestone	129
DENESSE	Joan	dau of Wm Kinge, 20/- + 6/8d per child	109
DERRINGTON	Elizabeth	Harlow, w of Geo, gold items + board/lodging	122
DERRINGTON	George	Harlow ymn, long detailed will 1574 proved 1575	122
DERYNGTON	George	Harlow, bro of Margt, 10 nobles fm Geo Derrington	123
DERYNGTON	Henry	Given 20/- in will of Geo Derrington of Harlow	122
DERYNGTON	Joan	Harlow, sis of Margt, 10 nobles fm Geo Derrington	123
DERYNGTON	John	Nephew/svt of Geo Derrington, residue of goods	123
DERYNGTON	Margaret	Harlow, svt of Geo Derrington, 20 nobles in will	123
DERYNGTON	William	ex svt of Geo Derrington, 5pds in his will	123
DEVENISH	John	Mountnessing, svt of Robt Pascall, 20/- in will	101
DEYS	John	Gt Parndon, svt of Jn Bevys, 20d in his will	89
DISBOROWE	John	Eltisley, Cambs, csn of Jn Armonde, his overseer	115
DIXON	Edward	Held mortgage of Geo Derrington of Harlow	124
DOCKLEYE	John	Writtle, marr Margt Hayes of Widford	107
DOWE	John	Felsted svt to Mr Strangman, owed 17s by Geo Boote	116
DOWNES	Richard	Langham, supervisor for will of Wm Constabell	122
DRAKENWOOD		Moulsham, tenant of Francis Booseye in Moulsham	116
DRYWOODDE	Thomasine	S Benfleet, 5pds in will of Jn Lake + 4pds owed	110
DUCKET	Joan	wife of Robt, 5pds in will of Jn Lake, N Benfleet	110
DUCKET	Robert	owed 20pds to Jn Lake, forgiven in his will	110
DUXWELL	Randall	Harlow ? 40/- from Geo Derrington's will	123
EDWARDES	Robert	Sible Hednghm, sold brewing vat to Edwd Riche	104
EGHAM	Nathaniel	s of Susan Pavyet, 10pds at 21 in will of Thos P	102
EGYAT		sis of Richd Man of B'tree, 1 old angel	132
ELLYS	William	Cold Norton ? Witnessed will of Wm Clark	93
ELLYT	Denys	Grandmother of Richd Dale of E Hanningfield	94
EMSON	Joan	Eastwood, svt of Jn Bartlett, 40/- in his will	87
EMYSON	Richard	Rochford ? 10/- to his wife, will of Thos Collen	93
ENFELD	Dorothy	Named in will of Geo Derrington =Enfelde/Envilde?	123
ENFELDE	Agnes	Given 3pds 6/8d in will of Geo Derrington 1574	122
ENFELDE	Elizabeth	Given 3pds 6/8d in will of Geo Derrington 1574	122
ENFELDE	Susan	Given 3pds 6/8d in will of Geo Derrington 1574	122
ENGLAND	John	Canewdon (Apton Hall), 6/8d in will of Jn Barratt	87
ENGLANDE		Sister of Jn Barratt, 40/- in his will	87
ENVILDE	Dorothy	Harlow ? 20 nobles from Geo Derrington's will	123
ESGER	Thomas	Felsted, witnessed the will of Geo Boote 1568	116
ESTERFORD	John	Halstead ? Witness to the will of Jn Harvie	98
EVANS	Fulk	Rayleigh tailor, accom for life, will of Jn Lake	110
EVE	John	s-i-law of Thos Aylett, overseer, 40/- in will	85
EVE	Westan	Witness to the will of Thos Aylett 1602	85
FAGE	Edward	Mount'nsg? Witnessed will of Thos Porter 1577	134
FARDELL	John	Debden ? Witnessed will of Jn Bernard of Debden	89
FAUNCE	Edward	Cold Norton ? Witnessed will of Wm Walker 1593	114
FAUNCE	John	Rochford ? 10/- in the will of Thos Collen	93
FAYREHED	Thomas	ex svt of Jn Brett of Tolleshunt Major, 3/4d	118
FITCHE	Anne	eld d of Jn Bentley, silver spoon and gt chest	105
FITCHE	Clement	Gt Sampford, s of Wm, given all his goods	124
FITCHE	Richard	Bocking clothier, tenant of Jn Lagden in Bocking	129
FITCHE	William	Gt Sampford ymn, short will 1574 proved 1577	124
FITCHE	William	Bocking clothier? Tenant of Jn Lagden in Bocking	129
FITZHUGH	William	Given 10pds in the will of Thos Pavyet	102
FLECHER	Henry	Barnston rector, 40/- > poor, will of Chris. Scott	113
FOAKES	Thomas	Br-i-law of Jn Brett of Tolleshunt Major ?	118
FOAKES	Thomas jr	s of Thos Foakes the elder, 5pds from Jn Brett	118
FOLKES	Thomas	Lexden, csn of Jn Brett Elder, linen/clothing	119
FOLKES	Thomas eld	s of Thos, appr in Colchester, will of Jn Brett	119
FOOTE	Henry	Wivenhoe (Hubbard Damions) ymn, long will 1595	124
FOOTE	Joan	Wivenhoe, w of Hy, copyhold pty for life, &c	124
FOOTE	Joan	Wivenhoe, d of Hy, Hubbard Damions	124
FOOTE	John	Bro of Hy Foote of Wivenhoe	124
FOOTE	Peter	s of Wm Foote, Longlands from will of Hy Foote	124

FOOTE	William	Bro of Hy Foote of Wivenhoe	124
FOOTE	William jr	s of Jn Foote, Taselers from will of Hy Foote	124
FORDAM	Thomas	Gt Sampford, tenant of Richd Smyth (@ Boyton End)	135
FORDHAM	Trustram	Given 20/- in will of Geo Derrington of Harlow	122
FOSTER	John	ex svt of Jn Brett of Tolleshunt Major, 3/4d	118
FOSTER	Mary	dau of Wm Kinge, 20/- + 6/8d per child	109
FOSTER	Reynold	s-i-law of Wm Kinge, overseer of his will	109
FRANCKE	Richard	Esq, overseer of will of Thos Brett 1593	120
FRANCKWELL	Cecily	London, widow, 100pds &c from Wm Hearde of Rainham	128
FREEDRICHE	Lawrence	svt of Jn Brett of Toll. Major, 3/4d + pr boots	118
FREINDE	William	Stock ? Witnessed the will of Hy Harkewood	106
FULLER	Richard	s of Agnes Fuller, 2/6 in will of Jn Bearde	88
FYNCH	Henry	Ingatestone ? Witnessed will of Jn Byrde elder	121
FYNCH	Agnes	Netteswell, w of Andrew, 80/- pa and keep	95
FYNCH	Andrew	Netteswell ymn (Katherines, Gt Parndon), will 1563	95
FYNCH	Andrew	Gt Parndon, father of Eliz Fynche	89
FYNCH	Andrew	s of Thomas F, 6/8d in the will of Andrew F	95
FYNCH	Elizabeth	Gt Parndon, dau of Andrew, 1st wife of Jn Bevys ?	89
FYNCH	Isabel	dau of Andrew F, 5 chn recd 6/8d in his will	95
FYNCH	John	s of Stephen F, 6/8d in the will of Andrew F	95
FYNCH	John	s of Thomas F, 6/8d in the will of Andrew F	95
FYNCH	John	Netteswell, s of Andrew, Katherines Gt Parndon &c	95
FYNCH	John	Gt Parndon ? Overseer of will of Jn Bevys	89
FYNCH	Margaret	d of Stephen F, 6/8d in the will of Andrew F	95
FYNCH	Margery	Netteswell, dau of Andrew, 40/- in his will	95
FYNCH	Stephen	Netteswell, s of Andrew, furniture & effects	95
FYNCH	Thomas	Netteswell, s of Andrew, furniture & effects	95
FYNCH	Thomas jr	s of Thomas F, 6/8d in the will of Andrew F	95
FYTCH	Agnes	d of Jn (eld s of Thos) decd, 20 nobles at 24	126
FYTCH	Christopher	Steeple B, s of Thos, Toppesfield lease	126
FYTCH	Christopher	Bro of Thos elder of Steeple B	126
FYTCH	John	s of Christopher & nephew of Thos elder Steeple B	126
FYTCH	John	Steeple B, ygst s of Thos, Toppesfield lands @ 24	126
FYTCH	John	Steeple B, eld s of Thos, decd shortly pre-1564	126
FYTCH	John	s of Robt, 10 lambs willed by Thos of Steeple B	126
FYTCH	Philippa	Steeple B, d of Thos, 20 nobles at marr or 24	126
FYTCH	Philippa	Steeple B, w of Thos, 5pds pa, @ Cootes for life	126
FYTCH	Richard	Steeple B, s of Thos, balance of Bumpstead lands	126
FYTCH	Robert	Bro of Thos elder of Steeple B	126
FYTCH	Thomas	Steeple Bumpstead (Cootes), elder, ymn, will 1564	126
FYTCH	Thomas ygr	Lt Sampford, s of Wm, g/son of Thos of Steeple B	126
FYTCH	Thomas ygr	s of Christopher, g/son of Thos of Steeple B	126
FYTCH	Thomas yr	Steeple B, s of Thos, Prowdes/New House &c	126
FYTCH	William	Steeple B, s of Thos, Towliches in Lt Sampford	126
GALAWAYE	Anne	Moze, d of Thos, 40 pds at 21 or marriage	96
GALAWAYE	Francis	s of John, 10 pds at age 21 in will of Thomas	96
GALAWAYE	Henry	s of John, 10 pds at age 21 in will of Thomas	96
GALAWAYE	John	Bro of Thos Galawaye	96
GALAWAYE	Susan	s of John, 10 pds at age 21 in will of Thomas	96
GALAWAYE	Thomas	Moze ymn, Moze Hall, wil Feb 1572 proved March	96
GALAWAYE	unknown	Moze, unborn child of Thos, 40pds in his will @ 21	96
GALAWAYE	"Jozen"	Moze, wife of Thos, residue of all his goods	96
GARDENOR	widow	Moulsham, a tenant of Francis Booseye	116
GARRARD		sis of Richd Man of B'tree, 1 old angel	132
GARRARD	John	Black Notley, br-i-law of Richd Man, supervisor	133
GARRARD	Thomas	godson of Richd man, 3/4d in his will	132
GATES	Barbara	Paglesham, d of Wm Gates, 40mks at 21 or marriage	96
GATES	Faith	Paglesham, d of Wm Gates, 1/2 share in his residue	96
GATES	Michael	Cold Norton, svt of Wm Clark, Thatched Long Shepen	93
GATES	Richard	Paglesham, s of Wm Gates, 1/2 share in his residue	96
GATES	William	Paglesham ymn, West Hall, will 1584 proved 1584	96
GAYE	Clement	Maldon, s of Wm/Margery, 33/4d will by Jn Clark	92
GAYE	Margery	wife of Wm, given 20/- in will of Wm Clark	92
GAYE	William	Maldon, named in will of Wm Clark of Cold Norton	92

SEARE	William	Ingatestone ? Witnessed will of Jn Hills 1597	129
SEARLE	John	Gt Parndon ? Overseer of will of Jn Bevys	89
SELL	Abraham	Lincs, nephew of Eliz Derrington	122
SELL	Margaret	Kin of Eliz Derrington ? 3pd 6/8 in will of Geo D	123
SELL	Robert	Lincs, nephew of Eliz Derrington	122
SELL	Thomas	Kin of Eliz Derrington ? 5pds in will of Geo D	122
SELL	William	Lincs, nephew of Eliz Derrington	122
SELLANDE	Thjomas	Godson of Jn Bartlett, given 5/- in his will	87
SERLE	Joan	Marr d of Andrew Fynche, 40/- in his will	95
SERLE	John	s-i-law of Andrew Fynche, overseer of will	96
SEYERS	Philip	Rayleigh, former tenant of Nich Browater	121
SHARPE	Anne	Stock ? Dau of Hy Harkewood, 4yr-old colt	106
SHARPE	Ralph	Stock ? Marr Anne Harkewood	106
SHEAPHEARD	Rose	sis of Thos Allen of Virley, 10pds in his will	115
SHIPTHARPE	Benedict	s-i-law of Thos King, supervisor of his will, 10/-	108
SHIPTHARPE	Elizabeth	d of Thos King, m Benedict Shiptharpe	108
SHIPTHARPE	Thomas	s of Eliz/Benedict S, 3pods 6/8d from Thos King	108
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SIBLEY	Sibley	Harlow, supervised will of Jn Adam 1591	84
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SKINGLE	Elizabeth	Sis of Geo, 10 nobles in will of Geo Derrington	123
SKINGLE	George	Godson of Geo Derrington, 20pds in his will	123
SKINGLE	Joan	Sis of Geo, 10 nobles in will of Geo Derrington	123
SKINGLE	John	Br of Geo, 40/- in will of Geo Derrington	123
SKINGLE	Thomasine	Sis of Geo, 10 nobles in will of Geo Derrington	123
SKOTT	Ellen	E Colne, svt of Wm Stamer, 2 nobles in his will	136
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SKYNNER	Robert	Netteswell, svt of Andrew Fynche, 3/4d in his will	95
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SMETHE	Richard	Steeple Bumpstead ? Witnessed will of Thos Fytche	127
SMYTH	Christopher	Walden, kin of Thos Harrison, svt of Bart Carder	127
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SMYTH	Margaret	Gt Sampford, d of Richd, 40pds at 21 in his will	135
SMYTH	Richard	Gt Sampford ymn, Fleminges, will 1585	135
SMYTH	Richard jr	Gt Sampford, s of Richd, Fleminges incl 30 acres	135
SMYTH	Robert	Gt Totham, svt of Thos Sammes eld, 2 lambs + 5/-	113
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SMYTH	William	Gt Sampford, s of Richd,	135
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SNOWE	Elizabeth	Netteswell? 6/8d in will of Andrew Fynche	95
SNOWE	Richard	Gt Parndon, tenant of Jn Bevys	89
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STYLEMAN	Richard	Chelmsford ? Owed 20 nobles to Richd Longe	101
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SWALLOWE	John	Walden mercer, name in will of Thos Harrison	127
SWALLOWE	Stephen	Walden, s of Jn, 40/- fm Thos Harrison @ 24	127
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VEARE	Thomas jr	s of Thos Veare, Horndon pties of Robt Veare	137
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VIGORUS	William	Halstead, supervisor of will of Jn Prentise	103
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WADE	William	Ridgewell ? Witnessed the will of Jn Ludham 1587	111
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SAMPFORD	Thomas	Willingale Doe, hit by Richd Sampford 1565	187
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NAMES FROM A BOOK ON BRAINTREE AND BOCKING

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This book is an excellent & very readable history of Braintree and Bocking, Essex (nr Chelmsford & Colchester) by the former Deputy Head of a Braintree School. Braintree and Bocking were very large villages for their time and were strong in cloth manufacture.

The book seems to be produced to a high standard and is full of names as the author illustrates his topics with extracts from contemporary records. He appears to have drawn heavily on records held in the Essex County Archives and probably not elsewhere published.

There is a copy of the book in the NZ National Library in Wellington. I was using it for some personal research and was struck by the wealth of names. It seemed well worth sharing it.

Some names appear twice. This can usefully offer more information. But some apparent duplicates are often different people.

Mike Foster, Wellington, 1993

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COWELL	Nicholas	Paid to repair town pump 1681	135
COWELL	Nicholas	Member of the 4+20 vestry in 1687	145
COWELL	William	In plague list, prob died + others in family	95
COWLAND	William	In plague list, probably died	95
COWLES		Early Baptist in Braintree c1706	111
COWMAN	John	Aged 12+, not sworn in a tithing, fined, 1414	21
COX	George	Silkweaver, removal>Sudbury by order 5/5/1824	174
COX	Thomas	Vicar of Broomfield (nr Chelmsford) 1720	59
CRACKEN...	Samuel	A founder Bocking Mtg c1700 - CRACKENTHORPE	110
CRACKNELL	Robert	In plague list, prob died + others in family	95
CRAIG	Revd Thomas	Minister at Bocking End Ind Mtg 1802/65	198
CRANE	Robert	Signed agreement on highway repairs 1678	133
CRANE	Robert	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
CRANESHANK	Robert	Endowed lights for altar screen 1531	48
CRANESHANKER	Richard	Bequest for poor of Braintree 1500s	41
CRAWLEY	James	In B'tree overseers/vestry/ch'wardens 1824/35	183
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CURRAUNT	John	On a list of copyholders in 1832	19
CURZON	Edward	Gave money for church bell in 1523	46
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DAWES	Robert	Stisted yeoman, obstructed a highway 1578	86
DEAKER	Robert	Absent from church, drinking @ ch time etc	101
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DEBNAM	William	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
DEREMAN	William	Defaulting on tithes and fined, 1414	20
DEUNE	Nell	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
DEVENISH	John	Refused to pay for highway maintenance 1718	153
DEWDAT	John	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
DEWDAT	Thomas	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
DISS	Isaac	Gave 1/- to Fire Engine fund. List 5/6/1749	155
DIXON	Elizabeth	W'house pauper 1720, list of names/duties	158
DODD	John	Owner (?) of Gt Silk Mill B'tree 1834	174
DOEGOOD	Alice	W'house pauper 1720, list of names/duties	158
DOEGOOD	Thomas	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
DONMOWE	Joan	Brewer, broke the assize, fined, 1414	21

DONMOWE	Thomas	In court on "capital pledges" case, 1400s	20
DOREWARD	John	Of Doreward's Hall. His pigs trespassed 1300s	19
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DRAPER	J	Signed agreement on highway repairs 1678	133
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DYER	Jno Baldwin	In court on "capital pledges" case, 1400s	20
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FENN	J S	In B'tree overseers/vestry/ch'wardens 1824/35	183
FENTON	Samuel	In plague list, probably died	96
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FISH	John jnr	Contractor with paupers in employ 1818	163
FITCH	Captain	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
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FLETCHER	John	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
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FOXCROFT	Charles	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
FRENCH	John	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
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FRYTHE	John	Bocking weaver 1601, sought to erect cottages	84
FULLER	Anne	Not at church, but doing her washing, charged	104
FULLER	Anne	1630 absent from church, A'deacons Ct	103
FULLER	Mr	Noted in pew allocation 1815, exciseman	115
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FULLER	Thomas	Gave 10/6 to Fire Engine fund. List 5/6/1749	154
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GIBLIN	Frances	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
GIBLIN	Samuel	In plague list, prob died + others in family	96
GIBSON	Nathaniel	Gave 10/- to Fire Engine fund. List 5/6/1749	154





J. T. Fitch
1911

John copied from R.C. Fitch book



J. T. Fitch
1891

William Fytche

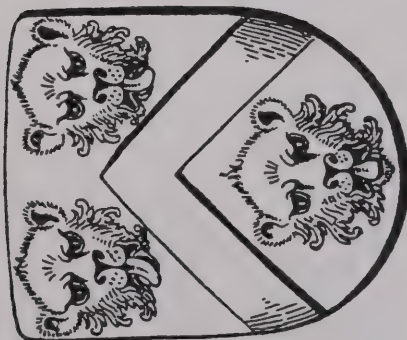
of

Little Canfield
and his Descendants

by

John T. Fitch

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Foreword

The search for ancestral artifacts such as period portraits, English church brasses, or long-forgotten gravestones is often not undertaken by genealogists in their research or published work. Almost 30 years have passed since genealogist and antiquarian Francis James Dallett, F.A.S.G., noted this problem:

Genealogists have not yet gotten on the iconography bandwagon. While they may own family portraits and memorabilia of considerable interest, they do not, for the most part, know how to use their pictorial material, either historically or visually, to best advantage in a family history.*

Regrettably, many otherwise first-rate genealogies continue to be published with few or no illustrations. Worse, many studies make little attempt to explore the material culture surrounding our ancestors. By not doing so, these authors miss the opportunity to offer their readers valuable historical context and, perhaps more importantly, the chance to make unusual genealogical discoveries. Much information is to be gleaned from identifying and examining domestic heirlooms and other artifacts — marked textiles, porcelain, needlework, silhouettes, silver, and mourning objects — to list a small number of possibilities.

At the other extreme, "instant" coats-of-arms have long been *de rigueur* as frontispieces in amateur or vanity publications. As such, these heraldic emblems have frequently been reduced from traditional symbols of hereditary identification to decorative, if erroneous, embellishments. As a result, some genealogists shy away from discussing coats-of-arms, authentic or assumed, in their written work. Such indifference may result in missing the chance to investigate heraldic sources for potentially valuable genealogical clues.

In *William Fytche of Little Canfield and his Descendants*, John T. Fitch has taken a different tack. He has authoritatively treated one branch of the family of William Fytche of Wicken Bonhunt,

Manufactured in the United States of America

* Francis James Dallett, F.A.S.G., "Iconography and Genealogy," *Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine* 26 (1970): 205-222.

Essex, England (d. 1466) by thoroughly examining traditional genealogical sources and a host of seldom, or never before seen, family artifacts. This iconographic exploration of the aristocratic family who remained in England (and whose known male descendants eventually became extinct) will be of interest to all those who have read John Fitch's outstanding books on American kinsmen of this same family: *A Fitch Family History: Ancestors of the Fitches of colonial Connecticut, Puritan in The Wilderness: A Biography of the Reverend James Fitch 1622-1702* (recipient of the 1994 First Prize in Family History from the Connecticut Society of Genealogists), and *Descendants of the Reverend James Fitch 1622-1702, Volume 1, The First Five Generations*. The author's keen eye probes the seventeenth-century origins of the Fitch coat-of-arms and makes known its probable adaptation from the much older Wentworth family coat-of-arms. Another avenue of interest is found in the author's use of oil portraits of various family members. They are not only presented for pictorial interest, but are used to explore relationships as depicted through heraldic quarterings — both real and fanciful.

Of all the artifacts presented in this monograph, I am most familiar with the Qing dynasty period armorial china made (probably) for William Fytche of Danbury Place, Essex, in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, which was acquired many decades ago by my maternal great-grandparents, Ashbel Parmelee (Jr.) and Josephine Hoyt (Smith) Fitch, of New York City. Known to me since childhood in my grandparents' house in Connecticut, this china service has long attracted attention from scholars, family members, and others. In 1946 one author wrote "specimens of this service are scarce in [England] as the Fytche family flourishes in the States and eagerly snaps up any pieces that come on the market."* Today, John T. Fitch has re-examined the origins of this service, and, as elsewhere in his study, has cited the most reliable and informative sources and authorities available.

William Fytche of Little Canfield and his Descendants will prove an important and worthwhile addition to the field of Anglo-American genealogy, and, one hopes, inspire family historians to incorporate iconographic research into their own personal genealogical methodologies.

D. Brenton Simons
Editorial Director, Newbury Street Press
24 November 1997

* Alfred Hills, M.A., F.S.A., "Early Armorial China in Essex," *The Essex Review*, 55:201-202.

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William Fytche of Little Canfield

Introduction

IN 1994, the author was fortunate to learn of the planned sale of four Fytche ancestral portraits of the 17th and 18th centuries. These are shown on pages 28, 29, 52, and 53. They had been purchased in England, prior to 1929, by the late Grant Fitch, a banker in Milwaukee, and came, eventually, into the possession of his granddaughter. Because of their condition, all four of the paintings required extensive conservation. In the process, a few anomalies surfaced regarding the later addition of legends and coats of arms. It is the purpose of this monograph to set the paintings in their genealogical context and to discuss the heraldry depicted in the various coats of arms. We begin with brief mentions of the earliest documented ancestors of William Fytche of Little Canfield.*

The Genealogy

1. **WILLIAM FECHE, FICCHE, FYCCE, FICHE, FYCHE, FYTCHE, FITCHE**** of Wicken Bonhunt, Essex Co., England. First mentioned on the Plea Rolls of 1428.^[1] Received grants of land at the manor court of Widdington in 1440/1 and in 1458/9.^[2] Death reported at Widdington court on 24 April 1466.^[2] Wife's name unknown. The court post mortem inquisition stated that "John Fytche is son and next heir of the same William."^[2]

Child (may have been others):

+ 2 i John, b. bef. 1437.^[2]

Sources:

[1] Exchequer of Pleas, 6-7 Henry VI, Public Record Office, E13/134. [2] Court Rolls, Manor of Widdington, New College Oxford.

* For a more detailed discussion of the first three generations, see John T. Fitch, *English Ancestors of the Fitches of Colonial Connecticut*. (Camden, ME: Picton Press, 2nd edition, 1994)

** All of these spellings were used at one time or another in manor court and other records. The most common spelling of the name in later generations, however, was Fytche, which, except where it differs in direct quotations, will be used here.

2. **JOHN FYCH, FYTCHE, FYTCHE (William)** was born no later than 1437, because in 1467 he was said to be "aged 30 years and more."^[1] First mentioned on a Court Plea in 1458, which said he was "of Wykyn."^[2] On 14 May 1467, he was again acknowledged as son and next heir and admitted to his father's estate; and, on the same day, he received additional grants of land.^[1] He married Juliana _____^[3] John's death was reported at the court session of 9 April 1468, at which time it was stated that "Thomas is his son and next heir and aged three years."^[1] Custody of the land was given to Juliana, who later married Richard Westley.^[3] She probably died about 1475, because a 1505 court record indicates that at that time she had been dead for 30 years.^[1]

Child (may have been others):

- + 3 i Thomas, b. abt. 1465.^[1]

Sources:

[1] Widdington *op.cit.* [2] Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, UK, (hereafter E.R.O.), Marc Fitch Collection (hereafter M.F.C.), A9355, Ewen Vol. B, ff. 189, 190. [3] Fitch pedigree, dated 10 Nov. 1977, compiled from records at the College of Arms, London, by Rodney Dennys, Somerset Herald.

3. **THOMAS FYTCHE, FYTCHE, FITCH (John, William)** was born about 1465, because he was said to be three years old at the time his father's

death was reported at the manor court of Widdington on 9 April 1468.^[1] He was admitted to his inheritance at Widdington court 9 November 1487, i.e., when he was about 21 years old.^[1] Thomas married Agnes Algore before 22 December 1490 when they received land from her parents, Robert and Margaret Algore.^[2] Agnes was the only child and heiress of her father. She brought Brazen Head Farm in Lindsell, Essex, to the marriage. In the same year, Agnes received more land when her mother, Margaret Algore, died. In 1497, Thomas received an additional grant of land at the manor court of Lindsell Hall,^[2] and in November 1505, he took possession of land, which his father John had

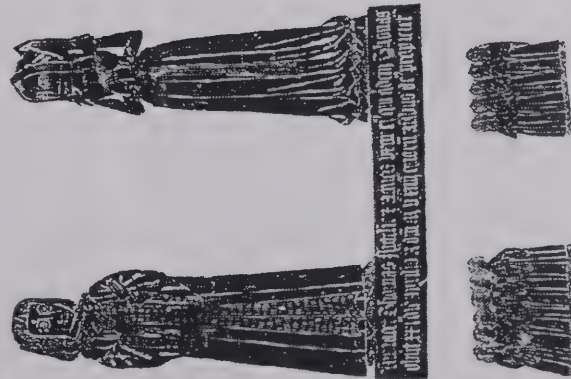


Fig. 1 - Brass of Thomas and Agnes Fytche, Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Lindsell, Essex. 25 x 17 in.^[11]



Fig. 2 - Window commemorating Thomas and Agnes (Algore) Fytche, Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Lindsell, Essex.^[12]

left in custody of his widowed mother, Juliana.^[1]

Thomas died, 21 April 1514, as commemorated on a brass in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Lindsell^[3] (Figure 1). Agnes died before 3 May 1527.^[1] Beneath them on the brass are images of eleven children—six sons and five daughters.^[3] Thomas and Agnes are also commemorated in a stained glass window (Figure 2) in the same church.^[3] This window, and a second showing their son William and his first wife, Elizabeth, were probably paid for by William, who had the advowson of the church (the right to be the patron of the church and to recommend its clergyman) from King Henry VIII (see Figure 3).

Children (these and prob. four others^[3]):

- 4 i Margaret, b. abt. 1494.^[2]

- 5 ii Richard, son and heir,^[1] succeeded to land at Widdington 9 Nov. 1514^[1] and to Brazenhead farm, Lindsell;^[6] bur. Lindsell, 26 Jun. 1579;^[5] m. (1) Eleanor Storke,^[6] d. abt. 1533,^[4] dau. and heir of Tristram Storke of Trent, Somerset;^[6] m. (2) Jane _____,^[2] bur. Great Leighs, Essex, 25 Jun. 1593.^[7]

- + 6 iii William, b. abt. 1496.^[10]

- 7 iv Thomas, m. Margaret Meade.^[6] Admitted tenant of lands in Widdington 3 May 1527.^[1]
- 8 v Roger, * will 12 Jan. 1558/9,^[8] d. Panfield, Essex;^[8] will proved Consistory Court, London 22 Feb. 1558/9,^[8] m. Margery _____.^[8] Admitted tenant of Hartshede, his mother's lands in Lindsell, 25 Sept. 1533.^[2]
- 9 vi Katharine, mentioned in settlement 1505.^[2]
- 10 vii Joan, mentioned in settlement 1505.^[2]

Sources:

- [1] Widdington *op. cit.* [2] Court Rolls, Manor of Priors Hall, Lindsell, New College, Oxford. [3] Brass and window, Church of St. Mary, Lindsell. [4] Chancery Proceedings, 1533. [5] Baptisms, Marriages, Burials, Lindsell, Soc. Gen. Transcripts. [6] Fitch pedigree, *op. cit.* [7] Burial register, St. Mary's, Great Leighs, Essex Co. [8] Consistory Court of London, 193 Horn (Bishop), Greater London Record Office, DL/C/357/1. [9] Rev. William Holman, mss. for *History of Essex*, E.R.O. T/P 195/15. [10] Based on age and year of death. [11] Courtesy British Library, MS 32490 M M 43. [12] Courtesy Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

6. WILLIAM FYTCHE (*Thomas, John, William*) of Little Canfield, Essex, b. abt. 1496; will 13 Oct. 1577;^[1] d. Little Canfield, 20 Dec. 1578 æ 82;^[2] bur. 22 Dec. 1578;^[21] will proved Prerogative Consistory Court, London 12 Jan. 1578/9,^[1] m. (1) Elizabeth _____, ^[2] m. (2) Anne Wiseman,^[6] d. 3 Dec. 1593,^[2] dau. of John and Joan (Lucas) Wiseman of Felsted, Essex,^[6] and mentioned in her father's will, 1559.^[3] After William d. Anne m. (2) City of London, 28 May 1579,^[19] Ralph Pudsaye of Grays Inn, Gent.^[19] William and both wives bur. chancel, All Saints Church, Little Canfield.^[2]

With the dissolution of the monasteries by King Henry VIII in 1538, William began to acquire properties in Essex. These often consisted of a manor house, several other buildings, and hundreds of acres of land. In 1538,^[14] he acquired the manor of Little Canfield, his principal residence, possibly from Walter Wittell and John Bassett, Esqs.^[9] At the time he was listed as a yeoman, but in 1540 he was accorded the rank of gentleman.^[14] On 3 Jan. 1544, Thomas, Lord Audley, received license from Henry VIII to alienate the rectory and advowson of Lindsell to William (Figure 3).^[33] In 1556, he bought the manor of Lindsell Hall, and in 1557 Camoys Hall, the largest manor in Toppesfield, both from Thomas, Lord Wentworth.^[14]

His next purchase was Great Canfield Park, which he obtained, 3 May 1561,^[20] from Thomas and Anne and Robert and Mary Wiseman.^[14] When John Wiseman originally purchased the land from the 18th Earl of Oxford in 1548, it was described as "all that messuage [a house and its outbuildings, from the French *menage*]

* Roger was the ancestor of the Fitches of colonial Connecticut.

Fig. 3 - Letter patent to Lord Audley, licence to alienate rectory and advowson of Lindsell Church to "Willo fytche de Canfeld p[ar]va" (William Fytche of Little Canfield), 3 Jan. 35 Henry VIII (1544).^[33]

and 260 acres of land called Moche Canfield Parke." To be called a Park, it must have been enclosed to hold deer. By the time William bequeathed the estate to his son William, he was possessed of "a messuage called Candfield Lodge and of 150 acres ... of arable land enclosed by a pale [a fence made of stakes] commonly called Much Canfield Parke, or the great Parke of Canfeild." There follow the name of six tenants, indicating the land was under cultivation and the deer were gone.

On 6 Feb. 1563, William bought the manor of Garnetts and Mercks in High Easter, near Bishop's Green, from Kenelm Throckmorton and John Paviott.^{[41][9]} And in 1572 he bought the manor of Albyns (Figure 4), its land partly in Stappleford Abbots and partly in Navestock, from his wife Anne's brother, George Wiseman and George's wife, Martha.^{[14]*} Albyns was a large estate,

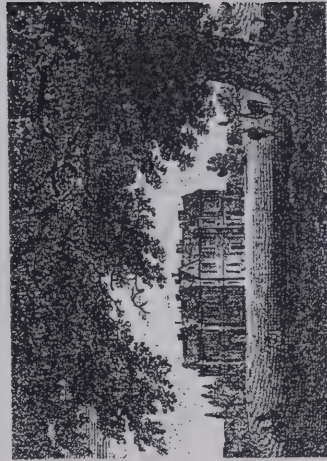


Fig. 4 - The Manor of Albyns, Stapleford Abbots and Navestock, Essex.^[39]

* According to *The Victoria History of the Counties of England*,^[15] George Wiseman and his wife Mary settled Albyns on his daughter Anne and her husband, William Fytche. This is probably an error, because several other sources say that William's wife was the daughter of John Wiseman and that George's dau. Anne had three other husbands.

comprising 5 messuages, 240 acres of arable land, 40 acres of meadow, 140 acres of pasture, 50 acres of woods, and rents of 40 shillings a year.^[15]

On 1 Oct. 1575, William bought the rectory, called Prior's (or Friar's) Hall, Parsonage Farm, Stebbing (Figure 5), and the advowson of Stebbing church, from William Tiffyn, Gent., and Mary, his wife.^[14]

Will of William Fytche of Little Canfield

My body to be enclosed in a coffin and decently buried in the chancel of Little Canfield church next to the place where Elizabeth my wife was buried, and there be prepared by my executors a convenient and fair marble stone with my arms and the pictures of myself, my wife and children and with such superscriptions as shall seem best to my executors. and the stone to be laid over my corpse for a perpetual remembrance as well of the day of my death as of the names of my wife and children [the children are pictured but not named on the brass]. To everyone that shall bear me to church to be buried 2s. To everyone of my godchildren 2s. To the poor people coming to my burial £4 in meat, drink and money. To a good and learned preacher provided to make a sermon at the time of my funeral 10s. To the poor inhabitants of Thaxted 13s. 4d., Great Dunmow 13s. 4d., King's Hatfield [Broad Oak] 13s. 4d. and Lindsell 6s. 8d.

To Thomas Walker my old servant the reversion of the lease of the tenement [a dwelling place, which might include land] called Tanners in the occupation of one Glascock belonging to the manor of Garnettes and Markes, which lease I have signed and delivered to him, paying the rent in the lease. To every of my servants besides their wages one quarter's wages. To Anne my well-beloved wife and to each of my children a featherbed, my wife to have the first choice and next to her Thomas my eldest son, next William my second son, and then [no name] my third son. To the parson of Little Canfield for the tithes negligently forgotten 3s. 4d.



Fig. 5 - Prior's Hall, Parsonage Farm, Stebbing, Essex.^[16]

Whereas I now hold the manor of Little Canfield Hall wherein I dwell for term of my life and 6 years after my decease, and whereas I hold for life and 1 year after a messuage and lands called Hodings in Little Canfield, I bequeath the terms of 6 and 1 years to my executors to receive the commodities and rent of the manor towards performing my will, with remainder after the expiration to the heirs of Eleanor my daughter, late the wife of Rooke Grene esquire, according to the conveyance. To the heirs of Francis Mannocke esquire and of my daughter Mary his late wife my manor and lands in Toppesfield called Camoyes which I hold for life. To my wife my manor of Lindsell for life, with remainder to Thomas according to covenants made before marriage between me and my wife. To Thomas the reversions [the right of succeeding to an estate upon the death of the original grantee] of my manors and lands called Garnettes and Markes. To my executors the yearly rents and profits of my two parsonages, viz. Lindsell Parsonage and Stebbing Parsonage alias Friars Hall in Stebbing, to go for the paying of my debts and the performance of my will, and then to Thomas. To William Great Canfield Park on condition that he pay yearly to Francis my younger son during my wife's life an annuity of £20 and such money as shall come of the park over £40 until my debts and legacies be paid, then the whole profits less the annuity, and after her decease to hold the park, and for default of issue to Francis. To my wife for life my manor of Abins [Albysn] and the lands, tenements, woods and free warrens [free warren is the right to keep or hunt on a warren, a piece of land enclosed for breeding game] belonging in Stapleford Abbots and Navestock, according to the assurance made by George Wiseman gentleman and Martha his wife to my wife and me, and after her decease to remain to Francis, and for default of issue to William.

My wife shall have the education, nurturing and bringing up of William and Francis and shall take the yearly rents and profits of their lands and annuities until they are 21, and during their nonage [the period of legal infancy or minority] she make a true account to them before my overseers, and to be allowed for her charges towards their apparel, meat, drink and schooling.

My muniments and evidences [documents, such as deeds], after such time as my office shall be found before the Queen's Majesty's Escheator of the county of Essex shall be delivered to the custody of my overseers.* I appoint my uncle Thomas

* An escheat was the lapsing of land to the Crown, or to the lord of the manor,

Wiseman and my brother George Wiseman overseers, and for their pains 40s. The residue to my wife, whom I make my sole executrix, most earnestly charging her to be careful and diligent with an honest motherly care for the bringing up and well educating of our children, and to the intent that she should be so the better able to assist them I have dealt the more liberally towards herself in this my will. I ordain Thomas to be sole executor, and, if he refuse, William and Francis.

Witnesses: Thomas Walker the writer and John Howland.

Proved 12 January 1579.

On the south side of the chancel in the church at Little Canfield is a brass (Figure 6), which reads,

Here lyeth buried under this stone the body of William Fytche, Esq., late Lord of Little Canfield, which had two wyffes, Elizabeth and Anne and the said William Fytche he had yssue by Elizabeth his first wife, two sonnes and three daughters, and by Anne his second wyffe, four sonnes, and the said William Fytche being of the age of 82 years changed this life on the 20th Dec. 1578.^[2]

When Anne died, she was buried in the middle of the chancel in the same church. Underneath her image are her three sons, in short cloaks, with swords at their sides, their hands folded in prayer. The inscription reads,

Here lyeth the Bodie of Anne daughter of John Wiseman of Felsted in the Countie of Essex Esquire, whoe was first married to William Fytche Esquire sometyme Lorde of this Parishes by whom she hath three sonnes Thomas William and Francis

on the death of the owner intestate without heirs. The Escheator was an officer appointed yearly by the Lord Treasurer to take notice of the escheats in the county to which he was appointed, and to certify them into the Exchequer, the court in which the financial business of the country was transacted. With William's "muniments and evidences," his overseers would be able to prove his right to pass his lands on to his wife and children.

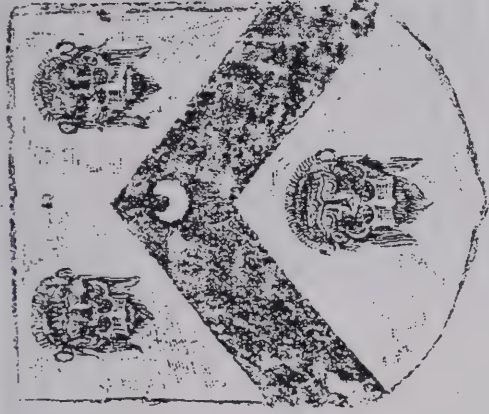


Fig. 7 - Arms of William Fytche (rubbing made from one corner of brass shown in Fig. 6).



Fig. 8 - Wentworth Arms.^[13]

after whose death she was married to Ralph Pudsey of Grey's Inn Esquire. She dyed the third day of December Anno 1593.^[2]

Fytche Arms

Also shown in the corners of the brass over William's tomb are four instances of the Fytche arms. These are formally described as "Vert, a chevron between three leopard's faces erased or." This formulaic blazon [Fr. *blason*] or description is in archaic quasi-French, but it means that the tincture or basic color is green and that the chevron and three erased (cut off) leopard's heads are gold. Although these animals may look more like lions, lions are almost always shown in profile, whereas these full-face images represent the standard depiction of leopards.

The lion's companion is the leopard. What might be the true form of this beast was a dark thing to the old armorist, yet knowing from the report of grave travellers that the leopard was begotten in spouse-breach between the lion and the pard, it was felt that his shape would favour his sire's ... Then a happy device came to the armorist. He would paint the leopard like the lion at all points. But as the lion looks forward the leopard should look sidelong, showing his whole face ... [W]riters on armory protested that a lion did not become a leopard

by turning his face sidelong, but none who fought in the field under lion and leopard banners heeded this pedantry ...^[10]

The arms shown in Figure 6 are not rubbings; they are illustrations which must have been added later. In particular, there is no large shield at the top center of the brass. And although the smaller shields do illustrate the approximate positions of the arms on the brass, they are not accurate representations. Figure 7 is a rubbing made from the actual Fytche arms on the brass, showing the crescent moon which denoted William's cadency or position as second son. William probably adopted his arms from the virtually identical (and much older) Wentworth arms,^[11] shown in Figure 8. As Sir Anthony Wagner stated, "There are cases of one man granting away his arms to another ... Sometimes such sessions accompany grants of land ..."^[6] As we have seen, William bought Lindsell Hall in 1556 and Camoys Hall in 1557 from Thomas, Lord Wentworth. He may have added the crescent to *imply* that he had inherited the arms from his father. To the best of the author's knowledge, however, William was the first Fytche to use these arms. In 1699, when a Sir Comport Fytche of Kent was petitioning for a grant of the Fytche arms (to be discussed further, below), it would have been to his advantage to show that William's father, Thomas, had already used the arms. Robert Dale, Richmond Herald at the College of Arms, evidently visited Lindsell and reported "... the arms torn away,"^[12] though the author, who has examined the stone on several occasions, has seen no evidence of anchor holes or other marks in the stone, which might indicate that a piece of the brass had been removed. In 1898, an *Essex Review* article reported of the brass that, "It is well engraved for the period, in excellent condition, still perfect in all its parts and thoroughly characteristic of its kind."^[23]

The earliest recorded instance of the Fytche arms appears to be in *Pedegrees Hereldry Armes painted and Inblason*, a large, vellum bound notebook, begun in 1520 by Sir Thomas Wriothesley, Garter King of Arms, the principal officer of the College of Arms, from 1505-34.^[31] Also known as the Letter H Roll, this collection of arms and pedigrees, now at the Society of Antiquaries in London, includes later 16th century additions by others. Page 256, on which the Fytche entry appears, is not among those identified by the Society as having been made by Wriothesley himself, and is probably one of the later additions. The arms are in black ink with initial letters indicating the colors for the tincture, the chevron, and the leopard's heads. The one peculiarity of the entry is the legend accompanying the drawing, which reads "ffytch De north." Since Little Canfield could hardly be

considered in the North, Thomas Woodcock, the present Norroy and Ulster King of Arms, thinks it may simply have been "an abbreviation or misreading of some place-name in Essex."^[32] But the legend may well have given rise, as much as a hundred years later, to the mythical 13th century "John Fytche of Fytche Castle in the North," who appears on the vellum pedigree of Figure 18.

Children (these three, one other daughter, and one other son^[25]) by first wife, Elizabeth:

- 11 i William, bur. All Saints, Little Canfield, 5 Nov. 1561.^[21]
- 12 ii Eleanor, mentioned as deceased in her father's will 1577,^[1] m. Rooke Greene, Esq.^[1] d. Little Sampford, Essex, 9 Apr. 1602,^[26] eldest son and heir of Sir Edward Greene and Margery Allington.^[26] Rooke (or Rocus) succeeded to his father's estate at Little or New Sampford. He was "a valiant confessor of the faith, suffering imprisonment and fines for 20 years," because he was a *recusant*, a Roman Catholic who failed to attend services of the Church of England.* Following 1581, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, he appeared frequently in presentments in Essex Quarter Session Rolls, one entry reading "Rocus Greene remains in the gaol in Colchester."^[26]

- 13 iii Mary, mentioned as deceased in her father's will 1577,^[1] m. Toppesfield, Essex 1556,^[9] Francis Mannock, Esq.^[1] of Stoke Nayland, Suffolk,^[6] d. 3 Nov. 1590,^[9] son of William and Audry (Allington) Mannock.^[9]

Children (these three and one other son) by second wife, Anne:

- + 14 iv Thomas, b. abt. 1560.^[24]
- 15 v William, b. abt. 1562, mentioned in his father's will, 1577,^[1] d.s.p. unm. Paris, 21 Nov. 1611 æ 49.^[22] William took the vows of a Franciscan novice at Douai in 1586, as Brother Benedict of Canfield, a Capuchin friar. He returned to England with a companion in 1589. The two were arrested as priests and imprisoned in the Tower of London, from which Canfield was later transferred to Wisbeck Castle. In 1592, he was released by Queen Elizabeth I, at the request of Henry IV of France, and returned to the continent to become Master of Novices and Guardian of the Convent at Rouen. The caption in Figure 9 reads,

* "Though all our Recusants be the King of Englands subjects, yet too many of them be the King of Spaines servants."^[27]

The venerable Father F. Benedict, Englishman, Capuchin priest. The Lord taught him discipline and wisdom, confirmed in him the grace of his spirit, and filled his heart with understanding. He died in the year of Our Lord 1611, in the 49th year of his age, the 25th of his conversion, on the 21st day of November.

The banners read, You are my servant, O Israel, in you I shall be glorified.

and,

I cannot be glorified except in your cross Lord Jesus.

The book on the table is open to display, "Life in His wishes."^[13]

Interest in Benet Canfield, as he was known in France, was revived by the publication of *Grey Eminence* by Aldous Huxley, in which Canfield's method of prayer, first set out in *The Rule of Perfection*, is described.^[23]

16 vi Sir Francis, bp. Little Canfield, 5 Sep. 1563,^[21] mentioned in father's will 1577;^[1] knighted 1604;^[7] will 3 Oct. 1608;^[6] d.s.p. 12 Oct. 1608;^[19] will proved, Commissary Court of London (Essex, and Herts.), 12 Jan. 1608/9;^[15] m. (as her 2nd husband^[9]) Margaret Tyrell,^{[7][9]} dau. and co-heir, with her 3 siblings, of Edmund Tyrell, Esq., of Beches, Rawreth, Essex,^[9] and wid. of John Daniell of Acton, Suffolk Co.^[19] After Sir Francis d. Margaret m. (3) Francis Jocelyn.^[26] In 1587 Francis sold the manor of Albyns, which he had received from his father, to Sir



VEN. P. F. BENEDICTIVS. Anglus Capuchinus
—Predicator, Disciplinam et Sapientiam docuit eum Dns.
—Formavit in se, gradatim spiritus sui et intellectus impetum
—per illius Obsequium Dei. Obiit 1611. Aetatis Suae 49. —calvary :
—L. S. die 21. Novembris.

Fig. 9 - William Fytche, Brother
Benedict of Canfield.^[29]

John Wood.^[9] He purchased Thundersley, Apr. 1595, from Richard White and prob. sold it in 1619 to Robert Wiseman.^[9] He also received Great Canfield Park from his bro. William.^[1] When Sir Francis d. he named his nephew, Sir William, No. 20 below, as his heir.^[9] Sir Francis's arms are described as having a "bordure bezantée," meaning the border contained gold roundels, like gold coins.^[11]

Margaret "in her own right enjoyed" the manor of Ramsden-Barrington or Barnton, Ramsden Bellowes, Essex.^[9] She, too, was a recusant (see Rooke Greene above). From 1600 to 1603, the last four years of the reign of Elizabeth I, she was fined each year in amounts from £40 to £80. On 5 Apr. 1605, she was presented by her parson to the Bishop of London "for that she hath not come to her parrishe church by the space of theis three yerres." Margaret's third husband was also a recusant, and together they were fined in 1609 and 1610.^[26]

Sources:

- [1] F. G. Emmison, *Elizabethan Life: Wills of Essex Gentry & Merchants*. (Chelmsford, Essex: Essex County Council, 1978), pp. 81-83. [2] Brass, All Saints Church, Little Canfield. [3] Fitch pedigree, *op. cit.* [4] Thomas Wright, *The History and Topography of the County of Essex*. (London: George Virtue, 1836), Vol. 2, p. 260. [5] E.R.O., M.F.C., Will of Sir Francis Fytche, Commissary Court of London, Essex & Herts., A9355, Vol. E. [6] Walter C. Metcalfe, ed., *The Visitations of Essex*. (London: The Harleian Society, 1878), Vol. 13, pp. 51, 111, 197, 325, 526.* [7] Anthony Richard Wagner, *English Genealogy*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 227. [8] A. R. Wagner, *Heraldry in England*. (Penguin Books, 1946), pp. 14, 193. [9] Rev. Philip Morant, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex*. (London: 1763-1768), Vol. I, pp. 204, 265; Vol. II, pp. 361, 415, 445, 457, 461, 462, 463. [10] Oswald Barron, "Heraldry" in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, 1910/11, p. 325. [11] Sir Bernard Burke, *The General Armory*. (London: Burke's Peerage Ltd., 1884), Vol. 1, p. 349. [12] Index card at College of Arms. [13] Translation by Tom Kozachek, Newbury Street Press. [14] Marc Fitch and Frederick Emmison, *Feet of Fines for Essex*, Vol. 5. (Oxford: Leopard's Head Press, 1991), pp. xi, 54, 62, 89, 165, 199. [15] R. B. Pugh, ed., *The Victoria History of the Counties of England*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), Vol. IV, Essex, p. 225, citing C142/184/34; CP25(2)/129/1647. [16] Photo courtesy Charles Fitch-Northern, Paignton, S. Devon, England. [17] Courtesy Manuscripts Dept., The British Library, London. [18] Courtesy Committee on Heraldry, New England Historic Genealogical Society. [19] E.R.O., M.F.C., Card Index (Names), A9355, F/N.I. [20] G. Eland, ed., *At the Courts of Great Canfield, Essex*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), p. 131. [21] E.R.O., M.F.C., Little Canfield Parish Register extracts taken 1 Feb. 1699, T/A 901/3. [22] E.R.O., M.F.C., A9355, Fitch pedigrees, F/5. [23] William Addison, *Essex Worthies*. (London: Phillimore & Co. Ltd., 1973), p. 35. [24] Morant, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 446, citing Inquisition, 21 Elizabeth, 19 January [1579]. [25] Rubbing made by a parishioner of All Saints

* These "Visitations" must be viewed with suspicion; many are spurious, and are not drawn from actual Visitations by the Heralds of the College of Arms.

Church, Little Canfield, and presented to the author. [26] *Essex Recusant*. (Brentwood, Essex: Essex Recusant Society), Vol. 1, pp. 58-61; Vol. 2, pp. 115, 116; Vol. 6, pp. 80, 86; Vol. 12, pp. 94, 95. [27] Oxford English Dictionary, citing R. Johnson's *Kingdom & Commonwealth*. 32. [28] Miller Christie and W. W. Porteous, "On Some Interesting Essex Brasses" in *The Essex Review*, Vol. 7, p. 39. [29] Courtesy National Portrait Gallery, London. [30] Courtesy E.R.O., Mint Binder, Stappleford Abbott. [31] Society of Antiquaries, London, mss. 476, p. 256. [32] Letter of 23 Sep. 1997 from Thomas Woodcock, College of Arms, London. [33] E.R.O., M.F.C. A9355, framed items.



Fig. 10 - The Dunmow area: Little Canfield, Great Canfield, High Easter, and Garnetts, Essex

14. THOMAS FYTCHE (*William, Thomas, John, William*) of Little Canfield and High Easter, Essex (see Figure 10), Gent., son and heir of William Fytche,^[1] b. abt. 1560;^[1] bur. Church of St. Mary, Great Canfield, 29 Nov. 1588;^[2] administration, 2 Dec. 1588 and 9 Feb. 1608;^[4] m. Great Canfield 22 Jun. 1579,^[4] Agnes Wiseman,^[4] dau. of John and Agnes (Waldegrave) Wiseman of Great Canfield.^[6] After Thomas, d. Agnes m. (2) Great Canfield, 7 Aug. 1590,^[2] George Wyngate^[2] of Harling, Bedford, Essex.^[6]

At his father's inquest post mortem, 21 Jan. 1579, Thomas was said to be son and heir and aged 19.^[1] In his father's will, he received the rectory and advowson of Lindsell as well as the church and manor of Prior's Hall, Stebbing. He sold the latter to William and Bartholomew Brock.^[11] In 29 Elizabeth (1586 or 1587), Thomas received the manor of Warden's alias Willingale Doe from Richard Wiseman, Sr. He and Agnes sold it to Nicolas Brocket of Sabridgworth.^[11]

Thomas was buried in the church of St. Mary, Great Canfield. A commemorative brass there shows a man in armour, and with a long sword, standing on a checkered floor. The inscription at his feet reads,

Here lieth buried Thomas fytche of Hystre esquier who had to wife angnes, the daughter of John Wyseman esquier and had Isue by her iij sonnes + iij daughters: wh^{ch} Thomas deceased y^e xxix of november in y^e yere of o^r lord god 1588.^[3]

In 1710, when the brass was noted by the historian, Rev. William Holman, it was in perfect condition. And in 1740, when another historian, Nathaniel Salmon, saw it he said that it lay "in the middle of the church." But according to a 1909 description in the *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society*, the brass now lies "in the chancel, within the communion rails."^[3] The article adds,

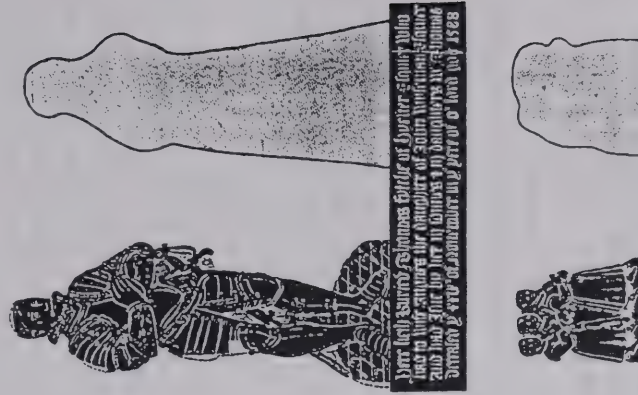


Fig. 11 - Brass of Thomas Fytche and three sons, with outlines of missing images of wife and three daughters, Gt. Canfield, Essex.^[3]

The brass has suffered much from the hands of modern restorers; for the effigies of the lady, the sons, and the daughters, together with the head of the man, have been replaced by incongruous modern reproductions, which are little more than caricatures of effigies of the period. We know of no other case in this county in which lost effigies have been thus replaced by new ones.^[3]

In Figure 11, taken from the Society's *Transactions*, the man's head and the figures of the sons are from a rubbing made in the 1870s. The article goes on to point out,

One curious feature about the brass is that the style of the man's armour and of the sons' costumes suggests a date some ten or fifteen years later than that given on the inscription. Not improbably the brass was laid down by the man's widow or children some years after his death.^[3]

Because Thomas died at only 28, when the children were still very young, the administration of his estate was granted to his father-in-law, John Wiseman, who was also "guardian of Agnes Fytche of unsound mind, the Relict [widow] of the same deceased. To administer during the minority of the said children and during the lunacy of the said Agnes the relict." One can only assume Agnes must have recovered her sanity, because she remarried less than two years later. Twenty years after his death, there was another administration of the possessions of Thomas Fytche, "late of Garnetts, below the parish of High Easter, Essex," which was granted to his daughters, Margery Glascock and Anne Fytche.^[4]

Children (these and two other sons^[5]) baptised Church of St. Mary, Great Canfield:

- 17 i Agnes,^[4] bp. 11 Sep. 1580,^[2] d. bef. 1608.^[5]
- 18 ii Margery,^[4] bp. 17 Jun. 1582;^[2] bur. Great Canfield, 1661;^[2] m. St. Gregory by St. Paul's, London 29 May 1606;^[9] Henry Glascock of Hartsbury in Farnham, Essex,^[7] Gent., son of Henry and Grace (Innow) Glascock.^[6]
- 19 iii Anne,^[4] m. aft. 1608,^[5] William Wyntell^[6] of Gloucester.^[12]
- + 20 iv William,^[4] b. abt. 1586.^[8]

Sources:

- [1] Morant, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 446, citing Inquisition, 21 Elizabeth, 19 January [1579].
- [2] E.R.O., M.F.C., Parish Register Abstracts, Great Canfield, Essex, Vol. 12. [3] *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society* (New Series, Vol. XI, 1909, pp. 113-115. [4] E.R.O., M.F.C., Administration of Thomas Fytche, Prerogative Court of Canterbury, A9355, Vol. E. [5] *ibid.*, Will of Sir Francis Fytche. [6] Metcalfe, *op. cit.*, Vol. 13, pp. 39, 51, 129. [7] Berry's *Essex Pedigrees*, Harleian Soc. Pubs., Vol. 14, p. 406. [8] E.R.O., M.F.C., Inquisition Post Mortem, 29 Jan. 1588/9, Card Index

(Names), A9355, F/N.I. [9] St. Gregory by St. Paul's Parish Register, 1559-1627, p. 97, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) Film No. 375,028. [10] E.R.O., M.F.C., Fitch pedigrees, A9355, F/5. [11] Morant, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 415, 461, 462, 478. [12] Visitation of Essex, 1664, Sir Edward Bysse, Clarenceaux King of Arms. (London: Mitchell & Hughes, 1888), p. 38.

20. SIR WILLIAM FYTCHE (*Thomas, William, Thomas, John, William*) of Garnetts and Woodham Walter, Essex, son and heir of Thomas Fytche, b. prob. Great Canfield, Essex abt. 1586;^[1] admitted Middle Temple, 30 Nov. 1601;^[11] knighted by King James I, 26 Mar. 1608;^[2] will 21 Oct. 1638;^[4] d. London 4 Feb. 1639/40;^[2] bur. Woodham Walter, Essex 6 Feb. 1639/40;^[25] will proved, Chelmsford, Essex 13 Apr. 1640;^[4] m. Downham, Essex, 1610, ^[1] Dorothy Cornwallis,^[5] administration 5 May 1649,^[4] dau. of Sir Charles Cornwallis.^[5] Sir Charles served as Treasurer to Henry, Prince of Wales, and Ambassador to Spain for the prince's father, King James I.^[6]

At his father's inquisition post mortem, 29 Jan. 1588/9, William was said to be son and heir and aged 3.^[1] He inherited Little Canfield, which he sold to Sir Henry Maynard.^[9] He also received the rectory and advowson of Lindsell, which he alienated in 1635 to Dudley, Lord North.^[2] Finally, he received the manor of Garnetts and Mercks, two miles from the church, near Bishops Green, on the road to Dunmow, purchased by his grandfather in 1563.^[2] There is a parchment map of Garnetts in the British Library, which includes the following written description (with the original spelling preserved):

A true and perfect Plott of all the demesne Landes [land in the domain of the owner] belonging to the Manor Garnetts, Scituate, lying and being in the severall Parrishes of High Easter, Denmowe Magna [Great Dunmow] and Waltham Magna [Great Waltham] in the Countie of Essex. Having the priviledg of keeping Courte Barron, *** with the Proffitts and Commodities [profit, gain], Fynes [fine = a fee paid by a tenant], Waites [obs. form of wite = a fine imposed for certain offenses or privileges], Strayes [stray = right of allowing cattle to stray and feed on common land], Deodants [prob. deodand = a personal chattel, such as an animal, which having caused a death, is forfeited and applied to pious uses], Hawking [sport of chasing birds or small animals with trained hawks], Hunt-

* "For sons to study at the Inns of Court was considered part of their education, even though they never intended to practise law or become barristers. Even when they became lawyers they still remained farmers. Among these were ... William Fitch ..."^[26]

** "Sir William Fitch K^t dyed at London & was brought downe and buried here."^[25] The court baron was a manorial court which dealt with land transactions, as contrasted with the court leet, which dealt with petty offenses.

ing, Fishing, Fowling [hunting wild fowl], etc. The Chappell, Mansion House and other tents [tenements] in their true places, and order. Everie Gatehouse, Gate, Stables, Dove-houses, Orchards, yards, Gardens, Highwaies, Driftwaies [driftway = road along which cattle are driven to pasture or market], Ponds, Paths, Pound [enclosure for stray cattle], Styles, Bridges and everie particular Field, Woods, Springs, Hedgerows, placed in their right Formes. With the contents of Acres, Roodes [rood or rod = $\frac{1}{4}$ acre] and Perches [perch = $1/40$ rood] of everie Several. As in this Plotte most plainlie it doth appeare.

Measured and surveyed in Ano. Dmi 1622 by Mee

Samuell Dalker (?)

Summa Totalis — 449 - i - 4 (being acres, rods and perches, ES)

The above is for the property of the Worshipfull Sir William ffitch Knight.^[14]

William also inherited, from his uncle Sir Francis, in 1608, the manor of Ramsden-Barrington and the lease on Great Canfield Park.^[10] On 29 Jan. 1610, he bought the free chapel at Ramsden-Barrington from John Clift of Ingatestone, Edward Newport, Esq., and William Staunton of Little Sampford, Gent.^[2] He sold Ramsden-Barrington, sometime after 1635 to Sir Edmund Wright, an alderman of London.^[2] Finally, he purchased the manor of Woodham Walter,

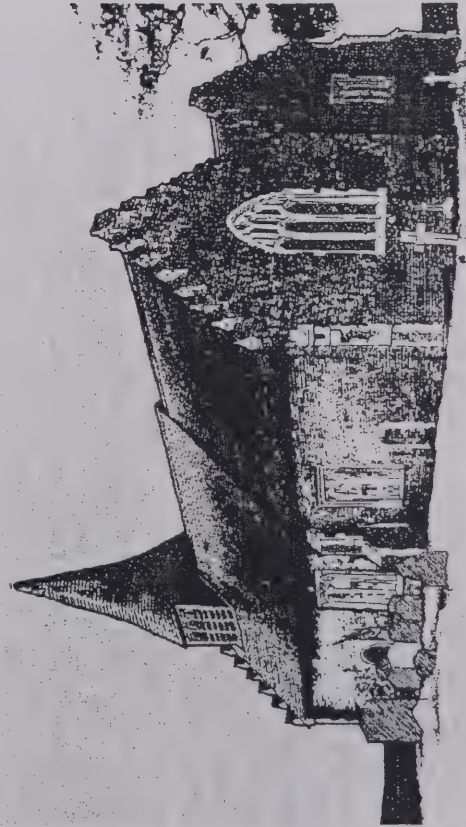


Fig. 12 - The Elizabethan Church of St. Michael the Archangel, Woodham Walter, near Maldon, Essex

Arms of William Fytche of Woodham
Walter in Essex: p. 236
Coke's Reports 1598

Arms p. 236

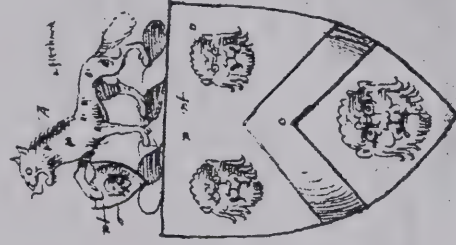


Fig. 13 - College of Arms, London, Misc. Grants, Vol. 7, p. 241.^[3]

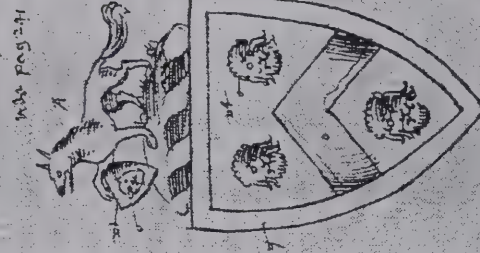


Fig. 14 - College of Arms, London, Misc. Grants, Vol. 7, p. 236.^[3]

the historic home of the noble family of FitzWalter and their successors, the Radcliffes, from Sir Thomas Mildmay of Moulsham.

Grant of Arms to William Fytche

R. C. Fitch, in his *History of the Fitch Family*,^[3] included two very similar illustrations, which he titled "Photos of ancient dockets of the College of Arms, London, England, showing original entries of the two patents of arms issued to Sir William Fytche, of Garnetts, Essex, England." These are reproduced here as Figures 13 and 14. In a letter to this author,^[11] Thomas Woodcock, then Somerset Herald, later Norroy and Ulster King of Arms, explained that these pages are from *Miscellaneous Grants*, Volume 7, titled "A Collection of Grants of Arms by Sundry Kings of Arms and their Lieutenants formerly Sir Thomas Shirley's Book." The illustrations are taken from pages 241 and 236, respectively, and are among the pages described in a manuscript catalog as "tricked arms and name of owners." The word *tricked* in this context means a pen and ink sketch. Woodcock added,

The College has the complete text of every grant since 1673, Before 1673 we have to rely on notebooks of the Kings of Arms and heralds which record grants in varying degrees of detail. ... This is therefore a manuscript which was not originally compiled as an official record of the College.^[11]

The legend at the top of page 241 (Figure 13) reads "Sir William Fitch of Garnetts in Barking in Com[itu] Comitas=County] Essex: p[er] Robt. Cooke Claren[ceux] 1588." The most striking feature of the legend is the date: 1588. William would have been only a year or two old in 1588 and not knighted as Sir William for another 20 years! Robert Cooke had the post of Clarenceaux at the College from 1567 to 1593, so, although he would have been in office in 1588, he would not have been when William reached his majority and was knighted. Woodcock explained this apparent anomaly as follows,

Page 242, which is the back of the folio on which 241 is written, is more illuminating as the first of the four entries is for Robert Morgan "of Little Halmgbury in Com Essex Esquire now living 1614 granted to Hugh Morgan apothecary to Queen Eliz by Wm. Dethicke the 25 of March 1588 and since confirmed to Robert by Wm Camden Claren 1613." This is evidence that the folio on which Sir William Fitch's name appears was written in 1614, six years after he was knighted and I therefore interpret the reference to the date 1588 as to the date of a patent by Robert Cooke, possibly to Sir William's father, Thomas Fitch ... who died on 29th November 1588.^[11]

Thus it appears that Robert Cooke, who had been responsible for the Visitation to Essex in 1570, formalized the arms the family had been using for at least two generations with a patent to Thomas, No. 14 above, in 1588. Then in 1614, William Camden, Clarenceux King of Arms, confirmed the entitlement of Sir William to use the arms, citing Cooke's 1588 patent. This later confirmation was then recorded in Sir Thomas Shirley's Book. A lesser puzzle lies in the phrase "Garnetts in Barking" in the same Figure. Garnetts, or the Manor of Garnetts and Mercks, is in High Easter near Dunmow, about 23 miles north of Barking, now part of Greater London. But Woodcock pointed out that,

Thomas Fitch is described as of Barking in the entry for the family at the 1634 Herald's Visitation of Essex (College of Arms MS C21,19b) and his son Sir William Fitch of Garnetts, has the words "in Barking" following the word Garnetts in his description but it has been crossed out apparently at the time the entry was made. I suspect therefore that the patent de-

scribed the grantee as of Barking and the person recording the entitlement to arms in 1614 wrongly assumed Garnetts was in Barking, as the compiler of the Visitation almost did.

Below the legend is the shield of arms, surmounted by the crest. Abbreviations of *ut* and *o* indicate the assignments of the colors *vert* and *or*, green and gold. On top of the shield is the wreath of colors, a cigar shaped object, displaying the Fytche colors. And above the wreath is an animal, standing directly on the wreath in Figure 13 and on a grassy mount in Figure 14, his right paw resting on a small green shield with a single gold leopard face. The animal is described as a *fitchard*. This beast (also called a *fitch*, *fichee*, *fitcher*, *fitchole*, *fitchew*, and *fitchuk*) is a European polecat or a kind of stoat or weasel and was used at one time as a term of contempt.^[19] It was selected in this case not, obviously, for its cachet, but rather as a pun on the name *Fitch*. As Sir Anthony Wagner pointed out, "The popular notion is that most arms are symbolic of ideal virtues, exploits in battle, and the like ... Far more characteristic of heraldry and of the medieval mind were the very many canting* or punning coats."^[15] Another example of such punning occurs in the so-called Ancient Fitch arms, which employ crosses *fitchée*, i.e., crosses pointed at the bottom for planting in the earth. Nevertheless, the Fytche family evidently didn't like the idea of a polecat for their crest and soon substituted another leopard. Later the Herald, Sir William Segar, described the crest as "on a wreath a leopard passant or a polecat proper,"^[16] where *proper* means rendered in its natural color, not in a conventional tincture. By the Visitation of 1634, i.e., while William was still alive, any reference to *fitchard* or polecat was dropped, and the crest was described as "a leopard passant [walking] proper sustaining within his dexter [right] paw an escutcheon *vert*, charged with a leopard's head erased or."^[17] Woodcock added,

I suspect that the arms may originally have been in a border Gules [*gules* = red] and the entry on page 236 of Miscellaneous Grant 7 [Figure 14] shows the arms in such a border and the crest of the fitchard appears to be on a grassy mount *Vert*. The border appears in the 1570 and 1614 Herald's Visitations of Essex (College of Arms MSS H10,14b and C15,3,8). In neither of these Visitation entries is a crest shown. In a copy made in about 1593 of the 1570 Visitation (College of Arms MS D11,15) the border has been omitted.^[11]

* The figures in canting arms bear an allusion to the name of the family.^[24]



Fig. 15 - Sir William Fytche of Garnetts, c. 1610, unknown artist. 42 x 36 in.

Portraits of Sir William Fytche and Dorothy Cornwallis

In about 1610, soon after William received his knighthood, his portrait (Figure 15) was painted by an unknown artist. About five years later, a second portrait of his wife, Dorothy Cornwallis (Figure 16) was painted, probably by a different artist.*

* When the paintings were included in R. C. Fitch's 1929 *History*,^[3] they were attributed to "Marc Gherardts, Junior" [sic], referring to Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (1561-1635), a Flemish portrait painter, active in England. Jacob Simon, Curator of 18th Century Portraits at the National Portrait Gallery, London [27] and Malcolm Rogers, Director of the Museum of Fine Arts,



Fig. 16 - Dorothy Cornwallis (Lady Fytche), c. 1615, unknown artist. 42 in. x 36 in.

William is shown wearing a black velvet tunic, with a narrow belt at the waist. He has a high, ruffled collar and lace cuffs. His right hand, resting on his hip, is just above a sword hanging from its own narrow belt, decorated with blue flowers. Dorothy is wearing a blue-gray silk jacket with lace collar and cuffs, trimmed on the edges in gold lace. The design includes red, yellow, and blue blossoms,

Boston,^[28] however, judging from photographs of the paintings, have both expressed doubt they are by Gheeraerts, Rogers adding that they were "probably not by the same hand" and, in the case of Dorothy's painting, one "cannot rule out the possibility that it might be a later copy, or derivative."

yellow vines, green leaves, and small wisps of blue. Her silk skirt is olive, decorated with fanciful red flowers and feathery leaves. Above her green eyes, her brown curls are held by a dark band or cap, which allows the rest of her long hair to drape over her left shoulder. Around her neck is a single strand of large pearls, while near her hand on the table is a longer strand of smaller pearls. During conservation, it was revealed that in previous overpainting, her lips had been heavily rouged and the cleavage of her bosom reduced.

Conservation also showed that the legends and coats of arms are not original, but were added at a later date. As the varnish and re-painting were removed around the arms at the upper right of William's portrait, an earlier legend, which may have been part of the original painting, became visible. The words appeared to be substantially the same as those in a second legend. But, probably because the aging varnish had rendered the second legend difficult to read, a later owner had yet a *third* legend painted at the middle left. In the process of conservation, it was decided not to remove the arms, simply in order to display the first legend, but rather to cover over the remnants of the first legend as well as the third and latest version. With the removal of the old varnish, the second legend became quite legible.

S^r W^m Fytche Kn^t / Son of Tho^s Fytche Esq^r / of Garnetts in high
Easter / Essex 1609 Æta 22 / Married Dorothy Daughter / of
S^r Cha: Cornwallis Kn^t

Dorothy's legend at the middle left of her painting reads,

Dorothy Cornwallis / Daughter of S^r Charles Cornwallis / Wife
of S^r W^m Fytche K^t / of Garnetts in Essex. 1609.

The Arms in the Portraits

The arms on both paintings are the same, except for the wreath of colors and crest above the shield in William's case (see Figure 17). The arms are those of Cornwallis impaling, i.e., combined with, those of Fytche. As we have seen, the Fytche arms are described as "Vert, a chevron between three leopards' heads erased or." The Cornwallis arms are "Sable, guttée d'eau or on a fess argent three Cornish choughs proper,"^[7] meaning gold water drops on a black background, and three Cornish choughs (a form of blackbird with red beak and legs), in their natural colors, on a silver bar across the middle of the shield. As in the case of the *fitchard*, the Cornish choughs in the Cornwallis arms were probably chosen for the pun they make on the surname.

Above the wreath is the crest. Note how different it is from the crest prescribed in Figure 13. The crest in William's portrait (women's shields did not display crests) is nothing like that blazon. Instead of a leopard with his paw resting on a shield, William's crest shows only a leopard's head with a sword or scimitar passing through its right cheek and out to the upper left behind the ear. This is described in Burke's *General Armory* as "A leopard's face or, pierced with a sword in bend sinister [slanted up to the left] proper, hilt and pommel gold."^[7] It has been suggested that William adopted the Cornwallis crest for his arms, but that crest depicted a stag, not a leopard.

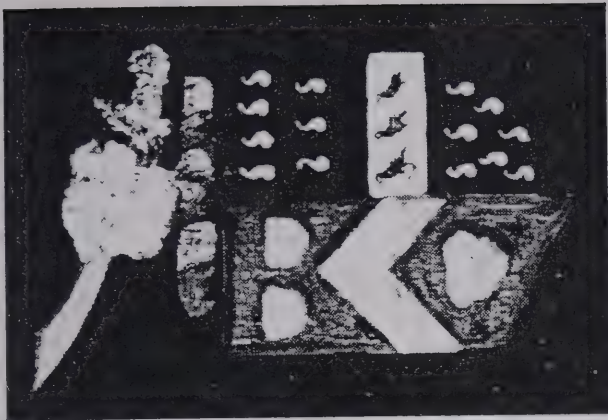


Fig. 17 - Shield and crest of Sir William Fytche, impaled by arms of Cornwallis

The 1636 Pedigree of William Fytche

In 1636, William commissioned one or more of the Heralds at the College of Arms to prepare a family pedigree.* The result was a 9 foot 6 inch by 2 foot vellum scroll, now at the Essex Record Office at Chelmsford, the top of which is shown in Figure 18.^[21] The cartouche reads,

Exacta, et Aeurata [sic] deducatio Stemmatis præclaræ Familiae de Fytche de Garnetts, in Comitatu Essexie, usque ad Annum [sic] Domini 1636.

Thus, it claims to be "An exact and accurate leading out of the pedigree of the distinguished family of Fytche of Garnetts in the County of Essex until the year 1636." It begins, however, with a fictitious John Fytche of Fytche Castle in the North, living in 1354, and extends through 14 generations to Sir Barrow Fytche, No. 27 below. The last three generations and some notes have been added to Sir William's original pedigree. It is elaborately decorated with

* It should be noted that this sort of outside work by the Heralds had nothing to do with their formal tasks at the College of Arms. Away from the college, they were perfectly willing to conjure up a wholly imaginary set of antecedents for a client with deep pockets, like William Fytche.

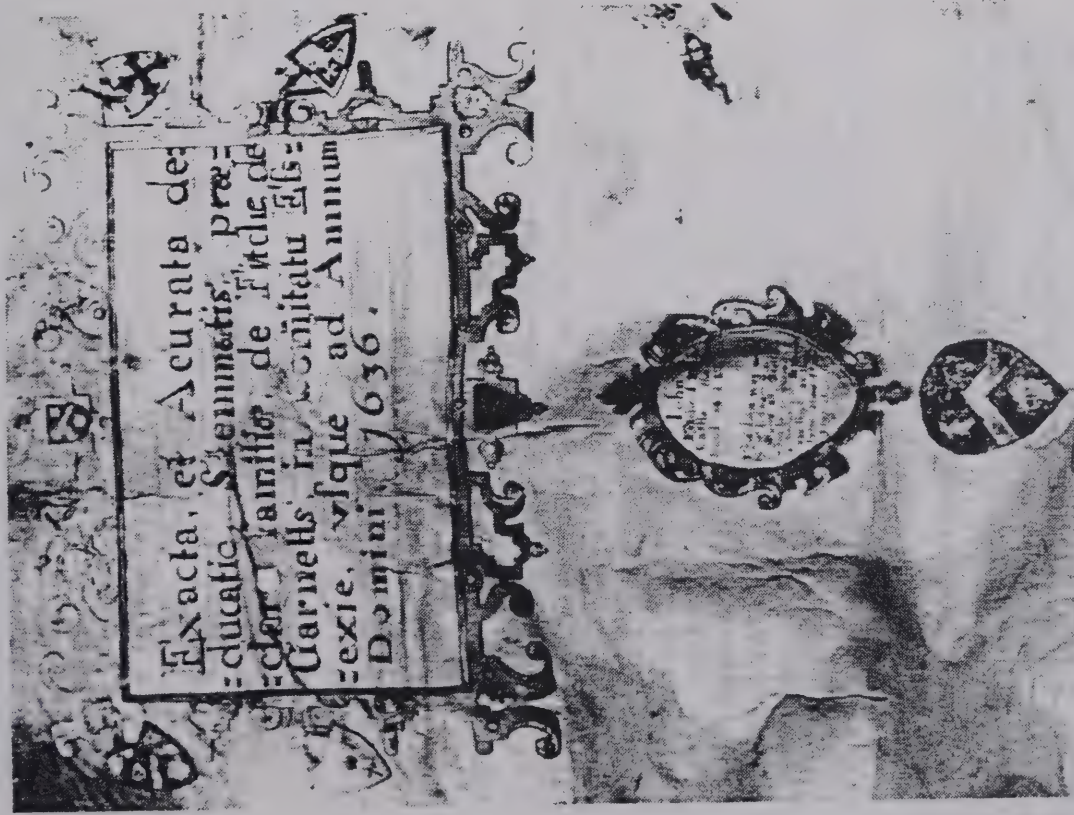


Fig. 18 - 1636 Pedigree commissioned by Sir William Fytche of Garnetts.^[21]

the cartouche at the top and 45 shields of arms. About four years after having his pedigree drawn up, William died at the age of about 54.

Summary of the Will of Sir William Fytche

Manors, farms, tenements, etc., already settled.
Moneys arising by sale of the said manors to wife Dame

Dorothy for life.

She or her executors or administrators to pay daughter Barbara 2000 l. [*libra* = pound] on day of marriage or age of 21. Dame Dorothy to bring up children.

Lands in Essex to be purchased (no value stated) for the benefit of son Charles and his heirs as my wife or her executors with the advice of Sir Henry Clovell of Wethanyngefeild, Essex, Kt., Mr. Maurice Barrow of Barneingham, Suffolk, Thomas Carnewalls of Lyncolne Close, Lincs., and Hamand Claxton of High Holborne in the parish of St Giles in the ffeilds, Midx., Esquire shall direct.

Plate and household stuff to Dame Dorothy for her life, with remainder to son Charles.

To Dame Dorothy to her own use (blank space).

To daughters, Dorothy and Katherine, 60 l. annually issuing out of manor of Woodham Walter purchased of Sir Thomas Mildmay of Moulsham and at Garnets and Markes.

Executrix: Dame Dorothy. Overseer: Sir Henry Clovell, Kt.

My humble and hartie desire is that his Majesty and the Master and Counsell of his Highnes Court of Wardes wilbe pleased to comitt the custody of my said sonne Charles (if I shall happen to decease during his minoritie) unto my inestimable good wife, etc.

21 Oct. 1638. Signed, sealed and published. (Signed) William Fytche

Witness: Edw Herry: Charles Jennynes

Probate: 29 Apr. 1640. Administration granted to Dorothy ffitch, relict. Saving power reserved to Barbara to prove a codicil.^[4]

Proving of the Will of Sir William Fytche:

Sir William Fytche, Knight of Woodham Water [*sic**]. 1640, April 13. At Chelmsford before a venerable man Robert Aylett, etc. Commissary, etc.

Woodham Water. Sir William Fytche, knight, deceased.

Lady Fytche his relict possessing goods. Appeared Henry Oughan of same and exhibited a Bond by which it appears that the said deceased had in goods debts etc. the sum of XL li. [obsolete form of *libra*] and over, and made faith for due administration.^[4]

Dorothy, Lady Fytche, probably died in early 1649. On 5 May 1649, administration of her possessions was granted to her eldest son, Charles.^[2]

* The modern spelling of this village is Woodham Walter.

Children born prob. High Easter:

- + 21 i Charles,^[4] b. abt. 1626.^[1]
- 22 ii Elizabeth, d. 1666.^[18] m. (1) St. Andrew Undershaft Church, City of London 6 May 1630,^[23] Sir Cristofer Rous,^{[8][23]} b. abt. Nov. 1604, d. 23 Mar. 1635 æ 30 yrs. 4 mos.,^[8] son and heir of Sir John Rous of Henham Hall, Suffolk Co.,^[12] m. (2) Sir Poynings More, 1st Baronet of Loseley, Surrey. More was made a baronet by King Charles I in 1642. He and Elizabeth had three sons, Sir William, the 2nd Baronet, Henry, and Robert. Elizabeth and Poynings bur. St. Nicolas, and their arms are commemorated in the Loseley Chapel.^[18]
- 23 iii Dorothy,^[4] "the dearly beloved most vertuous & religios wife of Edmund Castell rector of the parish was buried" Woodham Walter 11 Mar. 1651/2,^[25] m. Woodham Walter 3 Aug. 1648,^[25] Rev. Edmund Castell,^[25] b. 1606,^[23] d. 1685.^[23] In 1660, Rev. Castell published a set of verses congratulating Charles II on his restoration, and six years later was appointed a royal chaplain. He assisted in producing the Polyglot Bible and, on his own, produced a Lexicon in seven languages.^[23]
- 24 iv Katharine,^[4] b. abt. 1615,^[1] bur. Woodham Walter 27 May 1650.^[25]
- 25 v Barbara,^[4] b. abt. 1622; m. (license) 3 Apr. 1640 æ 18,^[1] George Nedham of Wymondly Priory,^[6] Hertfordshire, bp. Little Wymondley 16 Aug. 1618,^[1] d. 30 Jun. 1669,^[1] bur Wymondley æ 51,^[1] son of Eustace and Ann Nedham.^[1]

Sources:

- [1] E.R.O., M.F.C., Card Index (Names), A9355, F/N.I. [2] Morant, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 204; Vol. 2, pp. 446, 457. [3] Roscoe Conkling Fitch, *History of the Fitch Family: 1400—1930* (Haverhill, Massachusetts: R. C. Fitch, 1930), Vol. 1, facing pp. 8, 9, 44, 45. [4] E.R.O., M.F.C., Will of Sir William Fytche, Prerogative Court of Canterbury (45 Coventry); Administration of Dorothy, Lady Fytche, P.C.C. (Russell 51); A9355, Vol. F. [5] Fitch pedigree, *op. cit.* [6] George W. Marshall, ed., *Le Neve's Pedigrees of the Knights*. (London: The Harleian Society, 1873), Vol. 8, p. 232. [7] *Burke's Armory, op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 231, 352. [8] Gravestone, Henham, Suffolk Co. [9] Wright *History, op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 267. [10] E.R.O., M.F.C., Will of Sir Francis Fytche, A9355, Vol. E. [11] Letter of 14 Aug. 1996 from Thomas Woodcock, College of Arms, London. [12] Metcalfe, *op. cit.*, p. 397. [13] Anthony Richard Wagner, *The Records and Collections of the College of Arms*. (London: Burkes Peerage Ltd., 1952), pp. 69-71. [14] Parchment Manuscript, British Library, No. 41,848-ADD, courtesy of Mrs. Alexander Swapp. [15] Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 12. [16] College of Arms, Segar's Grants, EDN 57, 118. [17] College of Arms, Visitation of Essex, 1634, C21, f. 19b. [18] *Heraldry in the Loseley Chapel*, p. 4. [19] J. O. Halliwell, *A Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words*, 11th ed., 1889, p. 358. [20] *Heraldry in Essex*. (Chelmsford, Essex: County

Council of Essex, 1953), E.R.O. Pub. 19, pp. 29, 30, [21] E.R.O. No. D/DDs F2. [22] Canon John Ambrose Fitch, *An Essay in Fitchcraft: the story of Essex/Suffolk family*. (Halstead, Essex: mss. 1992), pp. 21, 22. [23] Addison, *Essex Worthies, op. cit.*, p. 38. [24] *Oxford English Dictionary*, citing 1727 51 Chambers Cycl. s.v. Arms. [25] Parish Registers of Woodham Walter, Burials 1630-1777, E.R.O. D/P101/1.1.2. [26] *Essex Recusant, op. cit.*, Vol. 8, p. 93. [27] Interview of 5 Nov. 1997 with Jacob Simon, National Portrait Gallery, London. [28] Letter of 10 Dec. 1997 from Malcolm Rogers, Ann and Graham Gund Director, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

21. CHARLES FYTCHE (Sir William, Thomas, William, Thomas, John, William), son and heir of Sir William Fytche, b. prob. High Easter, Essex, abt. 1626;^[1] res. Woodham Walter, Essex;^[1] admitted Middle Temple 26 Nov. 1644;^[1] will 9 Jun. 1666;^[8] bur. Woodham Walter 18 Oct. 1667;^{[9]*} will proved, London 27 Apr. 1670;^[6] m. (1) St. Peter, Pauls Wharf, London 13 May 1646,^[3] Anne Shiers,^{[3][5]} dau. of George Shiers, Esq., of Slyfield, Great Bookham, Surrey;^[6] m. (2) aft. 1657, Mary Wiseman,^[10] prob. the one bp. St. Helen's Bishopsgate, London 23 Apr. 1630,^[4] dau. of Sir Thomas Wiseman^{[10][4]} (and poss. Elizabeth Syddley^[11]) of Rivenhall, Essex.^[10] Mary was prob. the great-great niece of his great-grandmother, Anne Wiseman.^[11]

Charles was said to be son and heir and aged 13 at his father's inquest post mortem, 30 Oct. 1639.^[1] He inherited Woodham Walter. According to a note on his father's 1636 pedigree, Charles was a "Colonel for King Charles I at Colchester siege."^[6] For this support, Wagner said "the fortunes of this line were reduced by the Civil War."^[2] He lived to see the restoration of Charles II in 1660, but died six years later at the age of about 40.

Summary of the Will of Charles Fytche

First, all my lands & tenements freehold & copyhold to my eldest son Barrow Fitch & his heirs for ever.

Item, to my dear wife Mary Fitch £500 or £100 a year to be paid out of my lands & tenements as a rent charge at her election on condition that she waive all right to dower out of my lands, etc. also to said wife all linen and plate which she brought me and I give her my best coach and coach horses to be delivered to her immediately after my death, and in case my son Barrow shall disturb or not secure my wife in the enjoyment of the premises then I give and bequeath to my wife the £1000 I had by the will of Maurice Barrowe of Barningham, Co. Suffolk, Esq.

* "Carolus Fytche armig(e)r sepultus erat decimo octavo die Octobris 67."^[9] The indication that Charles was armigerous signified that he was entitled to bear heraldic arms.

To every one of my younger sons the sum of £500 each, viz: Robert, Henry, William, and Charles, to be paid when they attain to 21 years; should any of them die before this, the portion of the one dying to go to my son Barrow, but he to pay the survivors £10 each for mourning clothes.

Recommends son Charles to kindness of wife.

Overseers: George Nedham of Wymondley, Co. Hertford, Esqr. & William Glascock of Farnham, Co. Essex, Esqr., and each to have £20.

My eldest son to be sole Executor.^[8]

Portraits of Charles Fytche and his Wives

Figure 19 is said to be a portrait of Charles Fytche and is attributed in a catalog from Phillips, London, to "English School about 1660." If so, Charles would have been about 34 when he sat for the painter. His suit "is predominantly black, with a white lace frill, gold sash and bright scarlet frills to the sleeves."^[13] The legend at the upper left reads,

Cha^s Fytche Esq^r of
Woodham Water /
Essex son of S^r W^m /
Fytche of Garnets
Essex / Kn^t 1643

The rest of the legend is at the upper right and reads, married 2 Wives / 1st Ann Daughter of Geo / Shiers of Bokeham / Surry / 2^d Mary Daughter / of S^r Tho^s Wyseman / of Rivenall in / Essex Kn^t

The first comment that needs to be made is that the date of 1643 in the legend cannot be correct. Charles was born about 1626 and would



Fig. 19 - Charles Fytche. English School, c. 1660. 29 in. x 24 1/4 in.^[14]



Fig. 20 - Anne Shiers, first wife of Charles Fytche. Circle of John Hayls of Charles Fytche. English School, fl. 1651-1679. 29 1/4 in. x 24 3/4 in.^[12]

Fig. 21 - Mary Wiseman, second wife of Charles Fytche. English School, c. 1660. 29 in. x 24 1/4 in.^[14]

have been only 17 years old in 1643. As in the earlier paintings the legend must have been added later, and in this case the date is at variance with the known chronology. The auction house date of about 1660 is much closer to what must have been the actual date.

The arms, which were probably also added later, are at least correct. The center third shows the Fytche arms. The Fytche arms associated with Woodham Walter are described as having a "bordure gules,"^[17] i.e., a red border, but this may have been true of a later generation. The left third contains the arms for Shiers of Slyfield, described as "Or, on a bend azure between a lion rampant in chief sable and three oak leaves in base proper, as many escallops of the first."^[17] This can be translated as: on a gold background, a blue diagonal band. Above it a black lion rearing on its left hind leg and facing left. Below are three oak leaves in their natural color. On the bend itself are three scallop shells with their fan edges pointed downward. This appears to be an accurate description of what is seen in the Shiers section. To the right of the Fytche arms are those of Wiseman, described as "Sable, a chevron ermine between three cronels argent."^[17] The background is black, the chevron is white, with dark spots representing ermine fur, and there are three silver cronels or jousting lance heads. The arms are perhaps easier to see on the portraits of the wives themselves, Figures 20 and 21. Anne's picture shows the Shiers arms impaling

Fytche; Mary's the Wiseman arms impaling Fytche. Anne's legend at the upper right reads,

Ann Daughter of Geo. Shiers / of Bokeham Surry Esq^r / Wife
of Cha^s Fytche Esq^r / of Woodham Water Place / Essex 1641

Mary's portrait, in which she is wearing "a rich coloured gold dress,"^[13] bears a legend at the upper right, which reads,

Mary Daughter of / S^r Tho^s Wyseman of / Rivenal Essex Kn^t /
2^d Wife of Charles / Fytche Esq^r of / Woodham Water / Place
Essex / 1643.

The dates in both portraits are again not possible: assuming the women were about the same age as Charles, Anne would be only 15 in the painting and Mary would be about 17. Mary and Charles didn't even marry until after 1657, although, of course, her portrait could have been painted earlier.

Children by first wife, Anne Shiers:

- 26 i Maurice, bp. Great Bookham, Surrey 6 May 1647;^[1] bur.
Great Bookham 10 Aug. 1647.^[1]
- + 27 ii Barrow,^[8] bp. Great Bookham 14 Dec. 1648.^[1]
- 28 iii Robert,^[8] "second son,"^[9] d. unm.,^[5] bur. Woodham Wal-
ter "in the chancell in Sr Will^m Fytche his grandfather's
grave" 1 Jul. 1676.^[9] Administration of Robert's estate
was granted, 28 Jul. 1676, to his brother Henry.^[11]
- 29 iv Charles,^[9] bur. Woodham Walter 16 Jun. 1654.^[9]
- 30 v Henry,^[9] of Barningham, Suffolk, Gent., bur. Woodham
Walter "in due time" 19 Nov. 1720.^[9]
- 31 vi William,^[8] d. unm.,^[5] bur. Farnham, Essex.^[5]
- 32 vii Charles,^[8] d. unm. Bideford, Devon 12 Apr. 1712.^[1] He
was a customs officer.^[1]
- 33 viii Elizabeth, d. "an infant,"^[11] bur. Woodham Walter 22 Jan.
1652.^[9]
- 34 ix Edward, bp. Woodham Walter 2 Mar. 1657;^[9] d. "an
infant."^[11]

Sources:

- [1] E.R.O., M.F.C., Card Index (Names), A9355, F/N.I. [2] Wagner *English Gen., op.cit.*, p. 227. [3] St. Peter, Pauls Wharf Parish Register, p. 56, LDS Film No. 374,994. [4] St. Helen's Bishopsgate, London Parish Register, LDS Film No. 845,235, item 3. [5] Le Neve's Pedigrees, *op.cit.*, Vol. 8, p. 232. [6] Fitchcraft, *op.cit.*, p. 22. [7] *Burke's Armory, op.cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 352; Vol. 2. [8] E.R.O., M.F.C., Will of Charles Fytche, Commissary Court of Canterbury (46 Penn.); Administration of Robert Fytche, Commissary Court of London (Essex & Herts.), f. 320; A9355, Vol. F. [9] Parish Registers of Woodham Walter, Burials 1630-1777, E.R.O. D/P101/1.1.2. [10] Portrait of Mary Wiseman courtesy Phillips, London, Sale No. 30,081, 23 Apr. 1996. [11] Metcalfe, *op. cit.*, Vol. 13, p. 527. [12] Courtesy Sotheby's, London, Sale No.

LN7680, 12 Nov. 1997. [13] E-mail of 2 Feb. 1998 from present owners, Susan and Bruce Whiston, Birdingbury, Warwickshire, England.

27. **SIR BARROW FYTCHE** (*Charles, Sir William, Thomas, William, Thomas, John, William*), son and heir of Charles Fytche,^[1] bp. Great Bookham, Surrey 14 Dec. 1648;^[1] admitted Fellow Commoner Queens College, Cambridge;^[6] knighted by King Charles II at Whitehall 5 Apr. 1670;^[4] admitted Middle Temple, 9 Feb. 1671/2;^[1] d. 1 Mar. 1672/3;^[1] bur. Woodham Walter, Essex, 10 Mar. 1672/3;^[9] administration, 14 Mar. 1672/3;^[7] m. Woodham Walter 7 Nov. 1669;^[9] Elizabeth Bramston,^[9] will 20 Dec. 1674,^[8] proved 28 Dec. 1674;^[8] bur. Woodham Walter 30 Dec. 1674;^[9]* dau. of Sir Mondiford and Alice (Le Hunt) Bramston^[3] of Bassetts, Little Baddow, Essex.^[4]

Sir Barrow inherited Woodham Walter, his residence, from his father, and, as patron, presented Theophilus Peirse to the living of that parish in 1670.^[6] After the Restoration of 1666, he helped restore the family fortunes by marrying into another family of prosperous Essex lawyers, the Bramstons of Little Baddow, near Chelmsford.^[5] He was only 25 years old when he died, and an entry in the Woodham Walter Parish Register reads,

Sr Barrow Ffytche Knt. patron of this parish and the most affectionate friend to his chaplaine Mr. Theophilus Peirse Rector of the parish by his patronage and by him alwayes to be had in remembrance departed this life the first day of March 1672 about one or two of the clock in the afternoon and was buried in the vestrie on the tenth daye of March 1672.^{[9]**}

Elizabeth, Lady Fytche, was appointed administrator of Sir Barrow's estate.^[7] She survived her husband by less than two years and left a will, which began by asking,

To be buried in Woodham Walter near to my dear husband, in a private manner. To daughter Elizabeth, all estate, money, jewels, plate, household stuff and debts. Jewels, plate, etc. to be sold and paid to her at the age of 21 or day of marriage. If she should die, then to son William ffitche, and failing him then to my sisters Mary and Dorothy, if unmarried, and failing them to my younger brothers to which my father and mother think fit. Brother George Bramston to be guardian to son William and daughter. Executor: George Bramston.^[8]

* "The Lady elizabeth Ffytche widd was buryed the thirtieth day of December 1674 by Sr Barrow Fytch in the vestry."^[9]

** Under the old style Julian calendar, the new year began on Lady Day, 25 March, but under the new style Gregorian calendar, which England adopted in 1752, these dates would have been entered as 1673. This is indicated by the "10 Mar. 1672/3" in the summary of events for Sir Barrow.

Portraits of Sir Barrow Fytche and Elizabeth Bramston

Figures 22 and 23 were probably "marriage portraits," painted about 1670. When they were sold in 1996 by Phillips, London,^[14] they were attributed to "Circle of Adriaen Hanneman (?1604-1671)," but were recognized by their current owners,^[10] and confirmed by Tabitha Barber of the



Fig. 22 - Sir Barrow Fytche, by Gerard Soest (d. 1681). 30 in. x 24 1/4 in.^[10]

strand gold chain can be seen beneath his left hand and he wears a full undershirt of linen. At his throat is a flounce of fine point lace."^[10] The legend reads,

S^r Barrow / Fytche Kn^t of / Woodham Water / Place Essex / Son of Cha^r Fytche / Esq^r 1670 / married Elizabeth / Daughter of S^r Moundeford / Bramston Kn^t

The woman in Figure 23 appears to be about the same age as Sir Barrow and carries the same date. She is described as, "A pale complexioned lady wearing a low cut dress of pale blue satin with a boned bodice and full sleeves, trimmed with white lace or fine linen. She wears around her neck a collar of large pearls and pearl drop



Fig. 23 - Elizabeth Bramston, Lady Fytche, by Gerard Soest (d. 1681). 30 in. x 24 1/4 in.^[10]

Fig. 24 - Elizabeth Bramston, Lady Fytche, by Circle of Sir Godfrey Kneller. 50 in. x 40 in.^[11]

earrings. Her elaborately coifed hair is secured at each side by blue ribbons and falls down upon her breast and shoulders in full curls."^[10] Her legend reads,

Elizabeth Daugh^rter of S^r Moundeford Bramston / Wife of S^r Barrow / Fytche Kn^t 1670.

The arms in both paintings are those of Bramston impaling Fytche. The arms of Bramston of Skreens, Essex are described as, "Or, on a fesse sable three plates." A fesse is a horizontal band and a plate is a silver roundle or disc. Thus the arms show a black horizontal band on a gold background with three silver discs on the band.

Interestingly (and perhaps puzzlingly) there are two portraits of Elizabeth Bramston extant. The other, Figure 24, was purportedly painted the same year. Its legend at the lower left reads,

Lady Barrow Fytche / nee Bramston / 1670

In a letter of 30 Sep. 1922 to a Miss ffytche, Spink & Son, Ltd., London, which owned the second painting at that time, wrote,

The lady is wearing a dress of dull gold with sleeves and corsage in white; the cloak attached with a pearl rope and jewelled clasp is of olive green silk. The background is a rock with beautiful country landscape to the right. In the left hand top corner is a coat of arms, being those of the ffytche family quartered with those of Bramston...The picture was, until a

year or so ago, in the possession of the late Mr. M. A. Fytche whence it passed into the hands of a private collector — a retired Army Officer — from whom it comes to us.

In other words, this second portrait bears the same date as Figure 23, although the subject appears to be a somewhat older woman. The painting was eventually purchased by Grant Fitch of Milwaukee, presumably at the same time as he acquired the four others, now in the author's possession. It is in some ways a more important painting, regardless of subject; because at one time it was attributed to Sir Peter Lely. It was later given to the Milwaukee Museum, which deaccessioned and sold it in 1991. When it was sold, however, the attribution had been changed to School of Sir Godfrey Kneller, and it is certainly similar to other paintings of that school. But whether one or the other or both are portraits of Elizabeth Bramston is a matter for the beholder to ponder.

Children:

- 35 i Elizabeth, d. (smallpox) 2 Apr. 1695,^[1] bur. Woodham Walter, 4 Apr. 1695.^{[9]*}
+ 36 ii William, b. abt. 1671.^[13]

Sources:

- [1] E.R.O., M.F.C., Card Index (Names), A9355, F.N.I. [2] Berry's *Essex Pedigrees*, Vol. 14, p. 644. [3] Metcalfe, *op.cit.*, Vol. 14, pp. 643, 644. [4] Le Neve's *Pedigrees*, *op.cit.*, Vol. 8, pp. 15, 232, 233. [5] Fitchcraft, *op.cit.*, p. 22. [6] Wright *History*, *op.cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 659. [7] E.R.O., M.F.C., Administration of Sir Barrow Fytche, Commissary Court of London (Essex & Herts.), A9355, Vol. F. [8] *ibid.*, Will of Elizabeth, Lady Fytche, Commissary Court of London (Essex, & Herts.) (495 Pleasant), A9355, Vol. F. [9] Parish Registers of Woodham Walter, Burials 1630-1777, E.R.O. D/P101/1/1.2. [10] Courtesy T. Knox & Longstaffe-Gowan Collection, London. [11] E.R.O., M.F.C., Photographs of Fitch Family Portraits, A9545, F1/2. [12] Burke's *Army*, *op.cit.*, Vol. 1. [13] Based on death in 1728 æ 57, from 1625 Fitch pedigree (with later additions), E.R.O., D/Du 146/8. [14] Phillips, London, Sale No. 30,081, 23 Apr. 1996.

36. WILLIAM FYTCHE (Sir Barrow, Charles, Sir William, Thomas, William, Thomas, John, William) of Danbury Place, Essex, Esq., b. abt. 1671; d. 12 Sep. 1728 æ 57;^[1] "was bur'd from the Bath"^{[17]*} Danbury Place Chapel, *** 18 Sep. 1728,^[17] m. 29 Mar. 1695,^[18] Elizabeth Cory,^[18] b. abt. 1679, d. 7 Feb. 1757 æ 78,^{[15]***} bur.

* "Mrs. Elizabeth Fytche was buried April the 4th 1695 affidavit was brought April the 7th certified by Rob Corey Rctr of Danbury."^[9] Archdeacon Robert Cory was the father-in-law of Elizabeth's brother, William, No. 36.

** This mysterious phrase is quoted directly from the Parish Register. One can only speculate that he may have been stricken while taking the waters. Such a sudden and unexpected death might also account for the lack of a will.

*** The private chapel of the successive owners of Danbury Place was in the north aisle of St. John the Baptist, the parish church of Danbury. It was separated by a screen from the body of the church, but equipped with a "squin" or opening, which provided an uninterrupted view of the main altar.^[29]

S^r Comfort Fitch, and the other Descendents of S^r Thomas Fitch Esq^r and Baronee dectd^d, this late Father, shall and may take, use and bear, the Paternal Coat Armes of my Family, as of Right belonging to him with such a Proper Distinction as the King of Armes shall think fit, and is agreeable with the Law of Armes, in Writings whereof I have herunto set my hand and Seal of Armes at Danbury in the County of Essex, this Fifth day of February 1699 and in the 11th year of His Majesties King William the Third over England etc.

Sign'd and Sent in the Presence of
Wm^{ts} Fytche
Wm^{ts} Fytche

Fig. 25 -Part of an affidavit signed by William Fytche, in support of an application by Sir Comfort Fytche for the right to use the Fytche arms.^[14]

Danbury Place Chapel,^[11] dau. and heir of Archdeacon Robert Cory,^{[14][15]} D.D., and Mary (Bancroft) Mildmay Cory.^[14] William was Fellow Commoner at Queens College, Cambridge in 1689. Like his father he helped restore the family fortune by marrying an heiress. He was Burgess for Maldon, Essex in Parliament from 1701 to 1708 and again from 1711 to 1712. In that latter year, he was also Comptroller of the Lotteries.^[14] William received Danbury Hall and Fingrith Hall in Blackmore through his mother-in-law, who had earlier been married to John Mildmay. When she died in 1724, William took down Woodham Walter Hall and made his home at Danbury Place (Figure 29), about three miles from Chelmsford and next to Maldon at the mouth of the Blackwater River.^[14] Three years later, 12 Jun. 1727, Edmund Humfrey of Rettendon, Essex, died unmarried and gave his estate to William.^[24]

It was while still at Woodham Walter on 5 Feb. 1699 that William agreed to support a petition by Sir Comfort Fytche, Baronet, of Eltham and Mount Mascal, Kent for a grant of the Fytche arms (see Figure 25). William stated,

I William Fitch of Woodham Walter in the County of Essex,

Esq^r having perused several Evidences, and conferr'd Person-

**** Although the College of Arms pedigree^[15] gives this date and age at death for Elizabeth, the corresponding entry in the Danbury burial register is for an Elizabeth Hoyden, widow. Because William's wife survived him, it is quite possible she remarried. The register also lists an Abraham [sic] Hoyden, who was bur. 28 May 1747.^[17]



Fig. 26 - William Fytche of Danbury Place, 1703, attributed to Thomas Murray.^[28]

ally with S^r Comport Fitch ... do believe, own and acknowledge, the said S^r Comport Fitch to be Brancht and Descended from a Branch of my said Ancestors, and am willing and do hereby Consent, that the said S^r Comport Fitch ... may take use and bear the Paternal Coat Armour of my Family.^[14]

The "evidence" offered by Sir Comport was probably a spurious vellum pedigree of 1625,^[6] commissioned by Richard Fitch of Steeple Bumpstead, Essex, who "grafted" his line onto the Lindsell Fytche line by claiming that his grandfather, Richard Fitch of Cootes, who married Susan Allen, was the son of Richard Fytche, No. 5 above, despite the fact that the son of No. 5 lived at Lindsell and married Joan Ashe! This pedigree has been extensively discussed and exposed as a fraud by Canon John Ambrose Fitch, himself a member of the Steeple Bumpstead line.^[16]

Portraits of William Fytche and Elizabeth Cory

Figures 26 and 27 are portraits of William Fytche and Elizabeth Cory. They are attributed to Thomas Murray (1663-1735). William is shown wearing a red coat and brown robes. Behind him on the right is a coursing or hunting scene. At the lower left is the legend,

Will^m Fytche Esq^r / of Danbury Place Essex / Son of S^r Barrow Fytche of Woodham Water Kn^t / 1703 Æta^t 32 / married Eliz Daughter of / Rob^t Cory DD.

Elizabeth is wearing a blue dress, with a vase of flowers on the left and a garden with a fountain in the right background. Her legend at the upper left reads,

Eliz Wife of W^m
Fytche / Dau^r of
Rob^t Cory DD /
Ætatis Suæ 24
/ 1703

The arms on both paintings show an escutcheon of pretence, used when a man marries an heiress and "pretends" to the representation of her family. This form of shield shows the wife's arms on a small shield in the center of her hus-

band's arms. Although difficult to make out in these photographs, Elizabeth's shield is divided into two sections. The left side represents her father. The arms are those of Cory of Yarmouth, Norfolk Co., which call for "Sable, on a chevron or, between three griffins' heads erased of the second as many estoiles gules."^[12] This translates to a black background with a gold chevron, separating the heads of three griffins, mythical beasts with the heads of eagles and the bodies of lions, identifiable when "erased," i.e., when only the head is shown, by their lions' ears. On the chevron are three, red, five-pointed stars. Impaling Cory, on the right side, are the arms of Bancroft, her mother's maiden name. The arms for Bancroft of London are described as, "Or on a bend between six crosses crosslet azure three bars gold." On a gold background there is a diagonal band from upper left to lower right. Above and below the bend are three blue crosses, the arms of which are also crossed. On the bend itself are three golden sheaves of wheat.



Fig. 27 - Elizabeth Cory, wife of William Fytche, 1703, attributed to Thomas Murray.^[28]

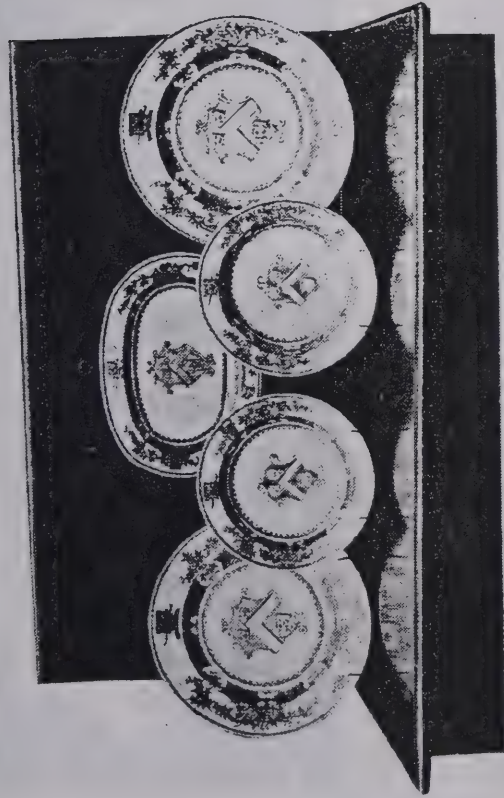


Fig. 28 - Fytche armorial china, Qing dynasty, Yongzheng period, abt. 1723-30, prob. purchased by Capt. Robert Fytche and shipped to his father, William, at Danbury Place, Essex.^[5]

Fytche Armorial China

William was probably the person who commissioned the set of Qing dynasty porcelain, some of which is shown in Figure 28. The decoration is described as "Arms in jade green and gold, with border all in underglaze Nankin blue."^[6] According to Alfred Hills in an *Essex Review* article on "Early Armorial China in Essex,"^[7] "The service came from the factory of the Emperor Khang Hsi [Modern Pinyin spelling is Kangxi, 1700-1723] about the year 1715, and the Squire's eldest son, Captain Robert Fytche, R.N., of Woodham Walter Hall, was no doubt the intermediary through whom the order was conveyed to Canton. He spent many years in voyages to the Orient." An earlier book on *Armorial Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century* by Sir Algernon Tudor-Craig,^[8] dates the service more ambiguously. Referring first to the Kangxi period, he states "At this period also, several well known services, such as that made for James Brydges, Duke of Chandos, about 1715, were decorated in the Imari taste, in red, blue and gold, and still others such as the Fytche service, were entirely in underglaze blue, the arms alone being in colour." Later in the book, however, he captions a photograph of a round dinner plate with the period and date of "Yung-tching [Yongzheng, 1723-1736], circa 1730." In a letter to this author,^[11] David Sanctuary Howard, author of a still more recent book on *Chinese*

Armorial Porcelain,^[10] said, "Late Kangxi and early Yongzheng were almost indistinguishable ... but the somewhat lighter shade of blue and finer detail in the Fitch and some other services of about 1723-30 is now recognized. (There was also a shortage of cobalt available at that time, leading to paler shades on the porcelain.)" If this dating is correct, it probably eliminates the possibility that the service was purchased by son Thomas, No. 43, described in 1730 as "agoing to the East Indies."^[14]

What is known is that, although a few pieces are held by various parties in England, the bulk of the service, shown in Figure 28, is now owned by a descendant of Ashbel Parmelee Fitch, Jr.⁸ (*Ashbel Parmelee*⁷, *Edward*⁶, *Dr. Jabez*⁵, *Jabez*⁴, *Isaac*³, *Nathaniel*², *James*¹). According to D. Brenton Simons of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, whose grandparents owned the service, it may have been brought into the family by Josephine Hoyt Smith, wife of Ashbel Fitch, Jr. She was a writer for *The Magazine Antiques* and traveled extensively in connection with her interest. There were at least two auctions in London through which she or her husband might have made the purchase: Phillips, May 1918, and Sotheby's, 15 Dec. 1922.^[9]

Returning finally to William of Danbury Place, Alfred Hills,^[7] quoting Morant,^[8] pointed out that as the owner of Fingrith Hall he also had "the honour of being Chamberlain to the Queen of England, of keeping her chamber and the door of the same on the day of her Coronation; and of having for his fee the furniture of the chamber, the beds, basons etc." And he added,

The Squire claimed this office at the coronation of Queen Caroline in 1727, but was quietly shouldered off. In my opinion the claim was a good one and should have been allowed by the Committee of Privileges. At the same time I can see that it must have been awkward to have an elderly gentleman toddling about after the Queen when she wished to retire, sleeping on the floor outside her door all night, and rolling up next morning with a couple of removal vans to carry off the furniture and crockery.^[7]

Children born and baptised, Danbury Place:

- | | | |
|----|-----|---|
| 37 | i | Mary, b. and bp. 31 May 1696; ^[18] d. y. ^[18] |
| 38 | ii | Elizabeth, b. and bp. 14 Aug. 1698, ^[19] bur. Danbury 21 May 1725. ^[17] |
| 39 | iii | Ann, bp. 30 Aug. 1699, ^[19] d. "in infancy." ^[26] |
| 40 | iv | Capt. Robert, b. 24 Nov. 1700; ^[19] bp. 6 Dec. 1700; ^[19] will 13 Dec. 1737; ^[20] d. (at sea) unm. 6 Oct. 1740; ^[18] will |

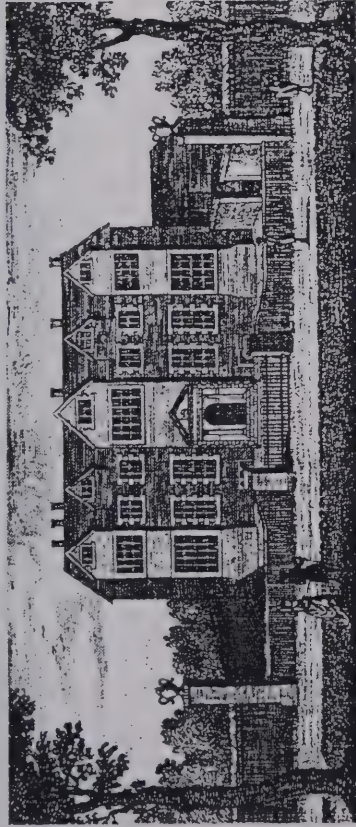


Fig. 29 - Danbury Place, at the time it was owned by Col. Thomas Fytche, son of William Fytche.^[27]

proved, London, 21 Nov. 1740.^[20] As eldest son, Robert inherited Danbury Place, but predeceased his mother, so never actually owned it. Thus the estate went to his younger bro., Thomas.^[14]

41 v Susannah, b. 2 Feb. 1702.^[19] bp. 15 Feb. 1702.^[19] living, 1762;^[23] m. St. Paul's Cathedral, London, 1 Jul. 1749.^[18]

Samuel Bennet of St. Dunstan in the West.^[18]

42 vi Charles "second son,"^[26] d. in infancy.^[18] bur. Danbury.^[18]

43 vii Col. Thomas, Gent., of Danbury Place, bp. 17 Jul.

1706;^[19] will 24 Apr. 1776, with codicil 24 Aug. 1776.^[21]

d. unm.,^[18] 27 Feb. 1777 æ 70.^[25] bur. vestry of St.

Michael's Church,^[25] Woodham Walter 5 Mar. 1777.^[17]

will proved 5 Mar. 1777.^[21] Thomas inherited Danbury

Place when his mother d. 1757, his bro. Robert having

predeceased him. He was appointed Sheriff of Essex, 13

Feb. 1767.^[22] Thomas's will provided that the bulk of his

estate, including Danbury Place, should go to his bro.

William's dau., Elizabeth Fytche, No. 50 below. She and

her husband, Lewis Disney Fytche, were also appointed

joint executors. In a codicil, however, Thomas revoked

these provisions, setting up a trust for their benefit,

instead.^[21]

44 viii Mary, bp. 21 Jan. 1707/8.^[19] will, 21 Jun. 1762 with

codicil, 15 Jul. 1766;^[21] proved London, 16 Feb. 1767.^[21]

45 ix Humfry, bp. 9 Jun. 1709.^[19] bur. Danbury Place, 23 Dec.

1709.^[17]

46 x Frances, bp. 10 Nov. 1711.^[19] will 9 Dec. 1777.^[21] d. 11 Oct. 1779 æ 68;^[23] bur. St. John the Baptist Church, Danbury,^[23] 18 Oct. 1779 "aged 68."^[19]* will proved London 14 Oct. 1779.^[21] At the time of making her will, Frances lived at Chelsea, Middlesex. She left £20 to her sister, Anne; her clothes to her servant, Elizabeth Fytche, and the rest of her estate to her niece, Elizabeth Fytche, and her husband, Lewis Disney Fytche.^[21]

47 xi Isabella, bp. 12 Mar. 1712/13.^[19] will 27 Jun. 1752.^[21] d. 5 Jun. 1755.^[18] bur. St. Clement's Church, The Strand, London,^[18] will proved London 13 Jun. 1756.^[21] Isabella left her estate in equal shares to her sisters, Mary and Frances.^[21]

48 xii Anne, bp. 21 Aug. 1714.^[19] m. Ardingly, West Sussex, 31

Jul. 1750,^[18] Richard Clarke, Esq. of Blake Hall, Essex.^[18]

+ 49 xiii William, bp. 5 Mar. 1716.^[19]

Sources:

- [1] 1625 Fitch pedigree (with later additions), E.R.O., D/Du 146/8. [2] *Burke's Armory, op.cit.*, Vol. 1. [3] David Sanctuary Howard, *Chinese Armorial Porcelain*. (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., [n.d]) p. 168. [4] R. C. Fitch, *op.cit.*, Vol. 1, facing pp. 25, 26; p. 52. [5] *ibid.*, Vol. 2, facing p. 175. [6] Suffolk pedigrees, British Museum, ADD.MS 5824 ff. 189-190-191. [7] Alfred Hills, "Early Armorial China in Essex" in *The Essex Review*, No. 220, Vol. LV, Oct. 1946, pp. 201, 202. [8] Morant, *op.cit.* [9] Sir Algernon Tudor-Craig, *Armorial Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century*. (London: The Century House, 1925), pp. 6, 54, 55. [10] David Sanctuary Howard, *Chinese Armorial Porcelain*. (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd.), p. 168. [11] Letter of 13 Sep. 1997 from David Sanctuary Howard, Chippenham, Wiltshire. [12] *The Essex Review*, Vol. 57, 1948. [13] The British Library, Oriental and India Office Collections, London (hereafter, India Library), No. 1/1/f.385. [14] Mary Hopkirk, "Danbury Place-Park-Palace in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries" in *The Essex Review*, No. 225, Vol. LVII, Jan. 1948, pp. 8, 9. [15] Fitch pedigree, *op.cit.* [16] Fitchcraft, *op.cit.*, pp. 22, 28-32. [17] Parish Registers, Danbury, Burials 1673-1780, E.R.O. D/P114/1/1 & T/R229/1. [18] *ibid.*, Card Index (Names), A9355, F/N.I. [19] E.R.O., M.F.C., Parish Register Abstracts, Danbury, A9355, Vol. 18. [20] E.R.O., M.F.C., Will of Robert Fytche, Esq.,

* As workmen were digging a grave for Frances in the north aisle of the church, they discovered a leaden coffin without any inscription or identifying marks. With the approval of the vicar and the churchwarden (Lewis Disney Fytche, husband of Frances's niece, Elizabeth, No. 50 below), they opened the coffin only to find an inner coffin of elm wood. On raising the lid of this second coffin, they found a shell, covered with a thick resinous cement. Finally, when they opened the shell, they came upon a body immersed in a "liquor or pickle." A Mr. Urban of Colchester Academy, who was present at the opening, later wrote, "I tasted and found it to be aromatic, tho' not very pungent, partaking of the taste of catchup and of the pickle of Spanish olives." The body, clad in a linen shirt, was "tolerably perfect, no part appearing decayed but the throat and part of one arm." It was decided that the body was probably that of the Knight Templar, whose effigy was in a niche in the wall near the grave, a member of the St. Clerc family, who had died 500 years earlier. After the parishioners had satisfied their curiosity, the coffins were closed and left "in situ quo."^[30]

Prerogative Court of Canterbury (Browne 293), A9355, Vol. G. [21] *ibid.*, Will of Thomas Fytche, P.C.C. (Collier 109); Will of Mary Fytche, P.C.C. (Legard 48); Will of Frances Fytche, P.C.C. (Warburton 412); Will of Isabella Fytche, P.C.C. (Glazier 165); A9355, Vol. H. [22] Richard B. Colvin, *The Lieutenants and Keepers of the Rolls of the County of Essex*. (London: Whithead Morris Ltd., 1934), p. 187. [23] F. Chancellor, "Essex Churches IV: St. John the Baptist's, Danbury" in *The Essex Review*, Vol. 2, pp. 28, 34. [24] *The Essex Review*, Vol. 3, pp. 224, 225. [25] Fred Chancellor, "St. Michael's, Woodham Walter" in *The Essex Review*, Vol. 1, pp. 94, 96. [26] E.R.O., M.F.C., William Holman of Halstead, Essex, *Pedigree of William Fytche of Danbury, Esqr.*, 4 Apr. 1722, pp. 8, 9, A9355, F/B/1h. [27] A Gentleman (pseudonym for Peter Muilman of Great Yeldham), *A New and Complete History of Essex*, 1771. [28] Courtesy Sotheby's, London, Sale No. LN7680, 12 Nov. 1997. [29] "The Parish Church of Danbury," E.R.O. D2. [30] "Curious Leadon Coffin found at Danbury in Essex" in *Gentleman's Magazine*, Apr. 1789, pp. 337, 338.

49. WILLIAM FYTCHE (William, Sir Barrow, Charles, Sir William, Thomas, William, Thomas, John, William), bp. 5 Mar. 1716;^[1] will 18 Jun. 1752;^[2] d. (of dysentery)^[12] Calcutta, India 8 Aug. 1752;^[3] bur. St. John's Church, Fort William, Calcutta, 9 Aug. 1752;^[4] will proved, London 9 Oct. 1754;^[2] m. Madras, India 25 Feb. 1744/5,^[5] Lucia Beard,^[6] 3rd dau. of --- Beard^[6] and Elizabeth (Fleetwood) Beard^[15] of Bengal. William's work in India was in connection with one of the factories of the East India Company.

English trading interests in the Bengal area dated from 1633. In 1690 a British factory was established on the site of Calcutta, and ten years later this post was raised to a presidency** known as Fort William. Friction with the Mughal subahdar*** (governor) of Bengal led to greatly increased

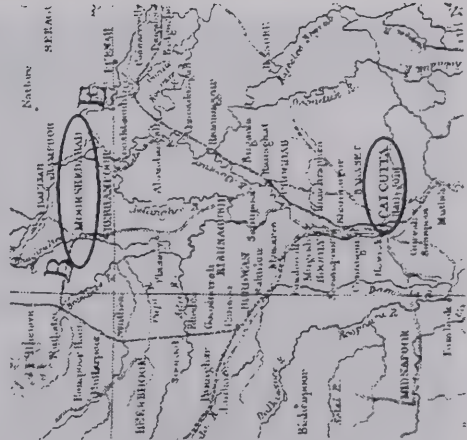


Fig. 30 - Part of Bengal, showing Moorsherabad, site of Cossimbazaar.

* A John Beard, Esq. was bur. St. Mary's, Fort St. George, Madras City 7 Jul. 1705; his son, Charles Beard, a possible candidate for father of Lucia, d. Calcutta, 30 Dec. 1747 æ 49; an Adam Beard was bur. Calcutta, 7 Sep. 1760; a John Beard, "Matross" (a soldier next in rank below a gunner in a train of artillery),^[11] was bur. Madras, 30 Dec. 1782; and a Richard Beard, Soldier, was bur. Madras, 13 Nov. 1794.^[17]
** Presidency: a district under the administration of a president; in India, each of the three divisions or factories of the East India Company.^[11]
*** Subahdar: a Governor of a *subah* or province of the Mogul empire.^[11]

British interest in and control of the area. After defeating the subahdar in 1757, Great Britain gained effective control of the whole province of Bengal and soon thereafter of Bihar. These were used as springboards for the eventual conquest of the entire Indian subcontinent.^[8]

Lieut.-Gen. Albert Fytche, a descendant of another line, wrote in 1878,

In 1746 William Fytche was appointed a member of Council of merchants at Calcutta. In 1749 he was made Chief of the English Factory at Cossimbazaar; the fort and mart of Moorsherabad, which was at that time the native capital of Bengal [see Figure 30].^[12]

Among his predecessors as president of Fort William (named for King William III^[12]) was John Beard, possibly the grandfather of Lucia, who held the office from 1701 to 1705. William was elected 5 Jul. 1752^[8] and held office for just one month before he died and was buried at the post. The editor of the *Journal of the Calcutta Historical Society, Bengal Past and Present*, wrote of the Governors of Fort William,

It has been suggested that the following inscription should be placed on the walls of St. John's Church ... The cost of such a memorial if really well done with the inscription in relief from sunk ground (brass) would be about £50. I suppose it would be an indignity to erect a cheap engraved brass tablet to the memory of persons so eminent as Governors of Fort William—to whom His Excellency the Viceroy stands in line of succession.

Close to this Church are interred

The Mortal Remains of the following Presidents and Governors of Fort William in Bengal:

- ... William Fytche
- Assumed office, July 5th, 1752
- Died August 8, 1752 ...^[3]

Will of William Fytche

William Fytche, chief for the affairs of the United Company of Merchants of England, Bengal. Bequeathes to his wife Lucia Fytche all her jewels and watches, to use them at her own disposal; and all his estate, not exceeding 60,000 rupees; and any surplus sums he gives to his daughter Elizabeth Fytche.



Fig. 31 - William Fytche of Bengal, c. 1752, Thomas Hudson or follower. 29 in. x 24 in.

But if his wife should have a child at the time of his decease, the same is to be divided between his daughter and the posthumous child, but are not to obtain it until they reach the age of twenty-one, or day of marriage. If his wife should die before his daughter or any other child his wife may have, he bequeathes the whole of his estate to his daughter and such other child, to be divided equally between them on attaining the age of twenty-one, or on their day of marriage. But if his wife should survive his daughter or such other child, the whole



Fig. 32 - "Agnes" Fytche, c. 1730s, unknown artist. 29 in. x 24 in.

of the estate is to remain with his wife, half of which is to be at her disposal, the other half to be divided equally between his surviving maiden sisters. Bequeathes to his maiden sisters £20 for mourning. Appoints his wife Lucia and his brother Thomas Fytche of Danbury Place, Essex, executrix and executor of his will; and in consideration of his brother's absence from England, requests his friends, Charles Manningham and William Frankland of Calcutta, gentlemen, to advise in collecting in the estate and settling the accounts of his wife, giving

them each a mourning ring for their pains. Appoints his wife and brother guardians of his daughter Elizabeth or any other child or grandchild he may have at the time of his decease, until their twenty-first year, or day of marriage ...^[12]

Written shortly before William's death, the several references in the will to a possible additional child leads to the speculation that Lucia may have been pregnant at the time. And, since the only surviving member of the family appears to have been daughter Elizabeth, one might further speculate that Lucia died during or shortly after childbirth.

Portraits of William and "Agnes" Fytche

Figures 31 and 32 show William and "Agnes" Fytche. Referring to the first of these portraits, which he owned and which he included in his book, Gen. Fytche wrote,

A portrait of William Fytche was painted by Hogarth.* It was not taken from life but was painted from a sketch taken in Bengal, and a portrait by a native artist. The picture is suggestive. It is difficult to look at it without thinking what a part William Fytche might have played in the subsequent history of India, had he not been cut off by that cruel dysentery, which is the curse of Bengal.^[12]

The back of the frame bears an old label attributing the painting to Allen Ramsay, but, judging from photographs of the painting, both Jacob Simon of the National Portrait Gallery, London^[16] and Malcolm Rogers of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston^[10] say that the portrait was probably by Thomas Hudson (1709-79) or a close follower. In the conservation process, it was revealed that, as in the earlier portraits, neither the legends nor the arms were original. William's legend, which appears at the lower left, over his elbow (Figure 33) is very difficult to see, except under strong light. It reads,

Wil^m Eytche [sic]

Ye Nabob

Obijt 1752 Ætat 35

Taking the legend one line at a time, there seems to be no plausible explanation for the misspelled surname. Since it was not, originally, on the painting, it seems unlikely it was copied from a similar mistake in the earlier "native" sketch. The *nabob* in the second line, from the Hindi *nawab*, was the title for a governor in India under the Mogul Empire, and may have been used as a title for William, as well. The last line states that he died in 1752, in his

* The attribution to Hogarth is not supported by any evidence or expert opinion.

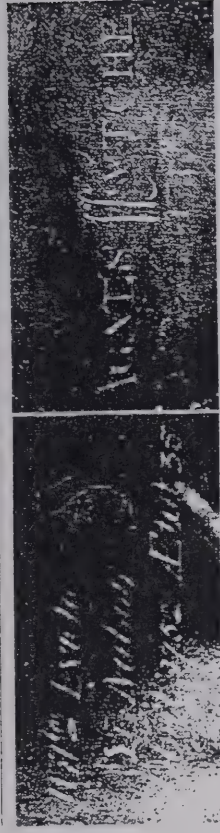


Fig. 33 - Legend at lower left of Portrait of William Fytche

Fig. 34 - Legend at lower left of Portrait of "Agnes fytche"

35th year (actually, he was 36). Interestingly General Fytche makes no mention of a companion portrait and neither does R. C. Fitch, who included only William's portrait in his *History*.^[13] According to both Simon and Rogers, the woman's portrait was probably painted much earlier, possibly in the 1730s. The present legend (Figure 34) reads "Agnes fytche." Since William's wife was Lucia, not Agnes, it is probable that the painting is not only earlier, but unrelated to William, and that the legend and arms were simply added to someone else's portrait, in order to provide a pendant to his.

The Arms in the Portraits

A possible clue to the mysterious choice of *Agnes* for a name lies in the shield of arms shown at the upper right of her painting (see detail in Figure 36). The arms impaling, i.e., combined with, the Fytche arms in the portrait are probably those of Wiseman, described earlier. The background is certainly dark, the chevron has the characteristic white field and dark spots of the ermine, and there are three silver crones or jousting lance heads. We have already come across an Agnes Wiseman who married into the Fytche family: she was the great-great-grandmother of this William, the wife of Thomas Fytche, No. 14 on page 21, who lived 200 years earlier! Thus, one explanation for choosing the name "Agnes fytche" might be that a dealer or early owner, not knowing the identity of William's wife, simply plucked the name and arms of Agnes Wiseman from a family pedigree — perhaps one of the vellum pedigrees that included such arms — and attached them to this portrait.

Even stranger perhaps are the arms displayed on William's portrait (see detail in Figure 35). These are shown quartered, which, as the term implies, means that the shield is divided into four quadrants. The first quarter is at the upper left and correctly carries the Fytche arms. The second quarter is at the upper right, the third at the lower left, and the fourth at the lower right.

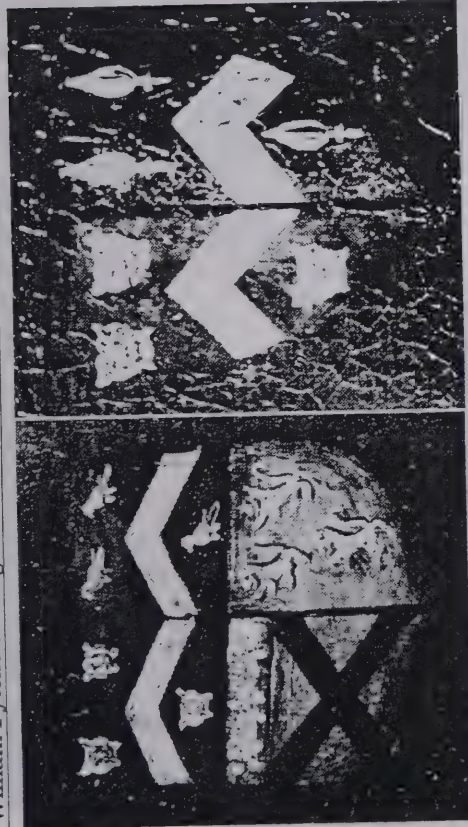


Fig. 35 - Arms on Portrait of William Fytche of Bengal

Fig. 36 - Fytche arms impaled by Wiseman on Portrait of "Agnes"

A permanent and hereditary combination of arms occurs when a man marries an heiress or coheiress, and has children who succeed in due course to the arms of their mother as well as their father.^[14]

That is the case for William, whose mother was an heiress. There is a prescribed order for assigning arms to the quarters. Assuming all of William's female ancestors were heiresses, then the second quarter should be the arms of his great-grandmother, Anne Shiers; the third quarter should be those of his grandmother, Elizabeth Bramston; and the fourth quarter should be those of his mother, Elizabeth Cory. In fact, Henry Beckwith, Secretary of the Committee on Heraldry of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, who examined these quartered arms found that,

[N]one of William's "male-line ancestors' wives had coats that looked anything like those shown in the 2nd-4th quarters of the shield. And quartering #2 must be one of these wives, for these quarterings must come in through such an ancestress, even if #3 and #4 are for families from which the ancestress in question descends through female lines."^[14]

The second quarter with the chevron between three birds does not seem to relate to any of William's ancestors. The third quarter, at the lower left, does show the arms of Cory, but it is Cory of Devon, a different family, whose arms are specified as, "Argent, a saltire sable on a chief azure three cinquefoils or."^[10] Translated this means that on a silver background there is a saltire, a cross of St. Andrew,

and on the chief, the upper third of the shield, there are three five-petaled flowers. The fourth quarter, the one at the lower right, appear to be those of Mildmay (William's grandmother, Mary Bancroft, had been married to a Mildmay), which are described as "Argent three lions rampant azure armed and langued gules."^[10] meaning a silver background with three blue lions standing on one hind leg, with red feet and tongues. But if it is Mildmay, it is irrelevant, because William was the son of her second husband, William Fytche of Danbury Place. Furthermore, with respect to three rampant lions, Beckwith pointed out, "this is the commonest coat in English armory."^[14] As a result, we can probably conclude that the shield of arms on William's portrait is, except for the first quarter, completely fanciful.

Child:

+ 50 i Elizabeth, b. India 5 Sep. 1749.^[9]

Sources:

- [1] E.R.O., M.F.C., Parish Register Abstracts, Danbury Place, A9355, Vol. 18. [2] *ibid.*, Will of William Fytche, Prerogative Court of Canterbury (Pinfold 272), A9355, Vol. H. [3] Walter K. Ferminger, "Leaves from the Editor's Notebook" in *Journal of the Calcutta Historical Society, Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. XI, Jul.-Dec. 1915, pp. 126, 127. [4] Burials, Calcutta, India Library, Vol. 1/1/f.385: "William Fytche, Esq. Gov." [5] Marriages, Madras, H. Dodwell, Curator, Madras Record Office, *Bengal Civil Servants* (Madras, India: Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, 1916), India Library, No. 2/1/f.213: "William Fytche to Lucia Beard," 25 Feb. 1744/5. [6] Fitch pedigree, *op.cit.* [7] Burials, St. Mary's, Ft. St. George, Madras City. [8] David P. Herriage, *Colonial Governors from the Fifteenth Century to the Present* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), pp. 116-131. [9] John Hutchin, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset*, 3rd edition. (London, England: John Bowyer Nichols & Sons, 1863), Vol. 2, p. 101. [10] Letter from Malcolm Rogers, *op.cit.* [11] *Oxford English Dictionary*. [12] Lieut.-Gen. Albert Fytche, C.S.I., *Burma Past and Present* (London: C. Kegan Paul & Co., 1878), pp. 15, 21. [13] RCF, *op.cit.*, facing p. 54. [14] Letters of 10 and 22 Dec. 1995 from Henry L. P. Beckwith, with enclosed material from various sources. [15] E.R.O., M.F.C., Card Index (Names), A9355, F/N.I. [16] Interview with Jacob Simon, *op.cit.*

50. ELIZABETH FYTCHE (William, William, Sir Barrow, Charles, Sir William, Thomas, William, Thomas, John, William), b. India 5 Sep. 1749,^[1] bp. Bengal 13 Oct. 1749,^[2] d. Danbury, 12 Nov. 1787,^[1] bur Swindery, Nottinghamshire;^[3] m. Danbury, Essex, 16 Sep. 1775,^[4] Lewis Disney, Esq., of Flintsham, Nottinghamshire,^[4] b. Lincoln, Lincolnshire 9 Oct. 1738,^[4] bp. St. Peter Eastgate, Lincoln, 11 Nov. 1738,^[5] d. London 22 Sep. 1822,^[4] son of John and Frances (Cartwright) Disney.^[4] It is probable that Elizabeth's mother, Lucia, died shortly after her father died, because Elizabeth was adopted by her uncle, Thomas, No. 43 above.^[6] When she was eight or nine years old, she also appeared in a portrait with him, painted in England in 1758



Fig. 37 - Elizabeth Fytche and her uncle, Col. Thomas Fytche of Danbury Place, c. 1758, Thomas Hudson 50½ in. x 42 in.^[7]

by Thomas Hudson (1709-79). The painting, now at Marc Fitch House, Dept. of English Local History, University of Leicester, bears a small brass plaque, which reads,

Thomas Ffytche, second son of William Ffytche, Esq. of Danbury Place, Essex and Elizabeth, his niece, daughter of William Ffytche, late governor of Bengal and youngest son of the said William Ffytche. By Hudson, 1758.

According to a description in a departmental newsletter,

Thomas Hudson is best known as the master of Joshua Reynolds, but before Reynold's ascendancy Hudson was one of the most popular portrait painters in London. ... The date given, 1758 may be slightly too late. The painting shows Hudson at the height of his powers; by 1758 he was in semi-retirement and painting little. The sheen on Elizabeth's dress is characteristic of Alexander Van Aken, Hudson's drapery painter who died in 1757.^[10]

Elizabeth was not only the sole heiress of her father, but when her uncle died unmarried in 1777, she was his heir as well. That meant that she received Danbury Place.^[8] Probably because of her status and wealth, her husband Lewis "assumed, by Royal Sign Manual, 27 Sep. 1775, the additional name and surname of Fytche"^[11] and became Lewis Disney

Fytche, Esquire, of Swinderby, Lincoln Co., and Danbury Place, Essex."^[12] The Disney arms, "Argent, on a fesse gules, three fleurs-de-lis or," are a silver background with a red horizontal band, on which there are three gold fleur-de-lis. In Figure 38, these are shown quartering the Fytche arms. This arrangement is referred to in Berry's *Essex Pedigrees*^[9] as an "Escutcheon of Pretence." Strictly speaking, however, an escutcheon of pretence would show only one instance of the wife's arms in the center of the shield of her husband's arms. The form in Figure 38 would normally be used by the children. The crest is described as "a lion, passant, guardant, gules," meaning the lion is walking and facing outward, one of the few instances in which the animal is not facing forward.

Elizabeth's inscription reads,

Elizabeth Disney Ffytche wife of Lewis Disney Ffytche died 12th Nov^r 1787 aged 38 years also her child still-born Nov. 9th 1787.^[11]

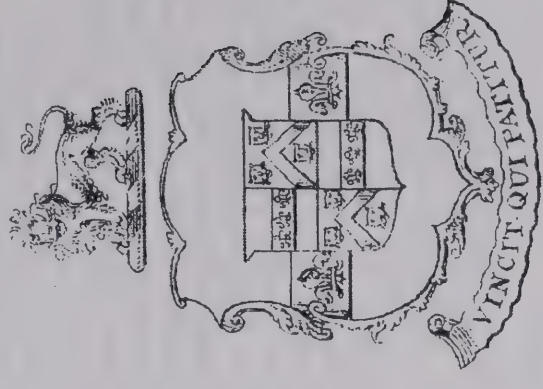


Fig. 38 - Disney arms quartering Fytche.^[9]

Children born Danbury Place, surname Disney Fytche:

- 51 i Frances Elizabeth, b. 29 Aug. 1776;^[1] d. 9 Aug. 1828;^[12] bur. St. John the Baptist Church, Danbury;^[12] m. St. George's, Hanover Square, London 21 Feb. 1800;^[4] Sir William Hilary, Bart., of Liverpool;^[4] b. 1771;^[13] d. Woodville, near Douglas, 1845.^[13] Sir William raised the First Essex Regiment during the Napoleonic Wars, for which he was rewarded with a baronetcy. In 1808, after financial losses, he retired to the Isle of Man, where he helped found the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.^[13]
- 52 ii Sophia, b. 15 Dec. 1777;^[14] d. 26 Jan. 1856;^[14] m. St. George's 22 Sep. 1802;^[4] (1st cousin) John Disney, Jr., Esq., FRS, LLD, of The Hyde, Ingatestone, Essex;^[14] Barrister at Law;^[4] b. Flintham, Nottinghamshire, 29 May 1779;^[4] d. 6 May 1857;^[14] son of Rev. John Disney, D.D., and Jane (Blackburne) Disney.^[14] Sophia, John, and their son, Edgar, are commemorated on a Disney monument in Fryerning churchyard, Essex. Against the north wall of the chancel of the church is a large shield containing the arms of Disney and his quarterings impaling Fytche.^[14]
- 53 iii Diana, b. 19 May 1779;^[11] d. 19 Jan. 1782;^[11] bur. Swin-derby.^[11]
- 54 iv Ann Maria, b. 21 Jun. 1780;^[11] d. 10 Mar. 1787;^[11] bur. Swinderby.^[11]
- 55 v Charlotte Lucia, b. 16 Apr. 1783;^[11] d. 5 May 1783;^[11] bur. Swinderby.^[11]
- 56 vi Child, (still born) 9 Nov. 1787.^[11]

Sources:

[1] Hutchin, *op.cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 101. [2] Christenings, Bengal, India Library, Vol. 1/1/F.349, copied from Register Book, Calcutta, Jan. 1748/9 to Jan. 1749/50: "Elizabeth, Daughter of William Fytche [sic] Esq' and Lucey his Wife." [3] E.R.O., M.F.C., Card Index (Names), A9355, F/N.I. [4] Berry's *Essex Pedigrees*, Vol. 14, p. 657. [5] IGI, baptismal record, extracted from parish registers of St. Peter Eastgate, Lincoln, Lincolnshire. [6] *The Essex Review*, Vol. 57, 1948. [7] Courtesy C.V. Phythian-Adams, Head of Dept., English Local History, Marc Fitch House, University of Leicester. [8] Fitch pedigree, *op.cit.* [9] William Berry, *County Genealogies: Pedigrees of Essex Families* (London: Sherwood, Gilbert & Piper, [n.d.]), p. 4. [10] Shearer West, "Marc Fitch House and its Facilities" in newsletter of the Dept. of English Local History, Univ. of Leicester. [11] E.R.O., M.F.C., T/A 901/3, citing Brit. Mus. Addit. mss. No. 22.296. [12] Memorial, north wall, St. John the Baptist Church, Danbury. [13] *The Essex Review*, Vol. 32, pp. 152, 153. [14] E. E. Wilde, *Ingatestone and the Essex Great Road With Fryerning*. (Oxford: Humphrey Milford, 1913), pp. 205, 210, 297.

The Fytche Portraits

The late Dr. Marc Fitch, who owned several of the Fytche portraits illustrated here, wrote on the back of a photograph of the picture of Dorothy Cornwallis,

Undoubtedly once at Danbury Place, Essex, and before that probably at Woodham Walter Place which latter home was pulled down, when William Fytche removed to Danbury on his marriage in 1695. Probably transferred to The Hyde, Ingatestone, when Sophia Disney fytche wed her cousin John Disney in 1802. Presumably sold c. 1870-80 by Mrs. Edgar Disney* and acquired by General Albert Fitch, C.S.I., in whose house, Pyngo Park, Romford it probably hung. His son, Ralph Fytche d.s.p. and the pictures were sold at Willis's Room, Duke St., St. James's, c. 1922 and bought by Spink who later sold this portrait (int. al.) to Grant Fitch of Milwaukee, U.S.A.^[1]

Four of the five portraits purchased by Grant Fitch, as indicated in the introduction, are now in the possession of the author. The fifth, one of the portraits of Elizabeth Bramston, Lady Fytche, was given to the Milwaukee Museum, which deaccessioned and sold it in 1991. More recently, several more of the paintings have come on the market. On 23 Apr. 1996, Phillips, London sold four portraits: Charles Fytche and his second wife, Mary Wiseman, as well as Sir Barrow Fytche and Elizabeth Bramston. On 12 Nov. 1997, Sotheby's London sold five Fytche paintings: Anne Shiers, the first wife of Charles Fytche, William Fytche of Danbury Place and his wife, Elizabeth Cory, and two portraits in the Comport Fytche line.

Sources:

[1] E.R.O., M.F.C., Photographs of Fitch Family Portraits, A9545, F/1/2.

Conclusion

With the deaths of William and his brother Thomas, there were no male heirs in this line to carry forward the Fytche name. As Canon John Fitch put it,

It is interesting to see how ... from rustic origins in ... North West Essex in the 15th century, by degrees and through a series of profitable marriages in the course of two and a half centuries, they contrived to zigzag their way across country in a steady south easterly direction via Lindsell, the Canfields and High Easter, to Woodham Walter and eventually Dan-

* Edgar Norton Disney was the grandson of Sophia and John Disney, No. 52 above. The painting of Sir Barrow Fytche bears a painted label on the back of the stretcher, which reads, "Edgar Norton Disney, 1887, inventory no. '22'"

[1] Fitchcraft, *op.cit.*, p. 24.

[1] Fitchcraft, *op.cit.*, p. 24.

fytyche
M. A. 42
Fitch
Ashbel Parmelee, Jr. 4
Comport, Sir 16, 43, 44
61
Grant 7, 42, 61

Fitch (cont'd)	Gre(e)ne	M	Edmund 18
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44, 61	Eleanor (Fytche) 13, 17	Ramsay	V
Josephine Hoyt (Smith)	Margery (Allington) 17	Allen 54	Van Aken
47	Rocus 17	Reynolds	Alexander 59
Marc 58, 61	Rooke 13, 17	Joshua 59	W
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Richard of Steeple	Hanneman	Malcolm 28	Anthony, Sir 16, 27
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Roscoe Conkling 25, 55	Henry	Elizabeth 49	Agnes 21
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Elizabeth 50	Henry IV	Cristofer, Sir 34	Thomas 12, 14
Frankland	of France 17	Elizabeth (Fytche) 34	Wentworth 16
William 54	Henry VIII 9, 10	Henry 34	arms of 16
Fytche	Henry VIII 5 10	John, Sir 34	Thomas, Lord 10, 16
Margaret (Meade) 10	Henry VIII 5 10	Robert 34	Westley
"Agnes" 54	Hilary	William, Sir 34	Juliana 8
Agnes 8, 22	William, Sir, Bart. 60	More	Richard 8
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42, 47, 48, 52, 57, 58	Kneller	Oxford	Robert 10
Elizabeth (—) 10, 12, 14	Godfrey, Sir 42	18th Earl of 10	Thomas 10, 14
Elizabeth (Bramston) 39	G	Elizabeth 35	Thomas, Sir 35
Elizabeth (Cory) 42	Gheeraerts	T	Wood
Frances 49	Marcus the Younger 28	Throckmorton	John, Sir 19
Francis 13	Glascok	Kenelm 11	Woodcock
Francis, Sir 13, 14, 18,	Grace (Innow) 22	Tiffin	Thomas 17, 25
24, 31	Henry 22	Mary 12	Wright
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The Ancient History of the Distinguished Surname

*** FITCH ***

This Anglo Saxon Chronicle related the ancient deeds and exploits of this founding race. It is an ancient manuscript written about 980 by scribes describing the Saxon presence in Britain from about the year 380 to the late 10th century.

Research analysts have carefully reviewed ancient manuscripts, such as the Domesday Book, the Ragnan Rolls, the Curia Regis Rolls, The Pipe Rolls, the Resrth Rolls, parish registers, baptismals, tax records, and other ancient documents and found the first record of the name Fitch, in county Suffolk where they had been seated from early times.

Your name Fitch, occurred in many manuscripts, but from time to time the surname included the spellings Fitch, Fitchitt, Fittch, Fitchet, Fitchit, and these spelling variations frequently occurred, even between father and son. For example, it was quite common for a person to be born with one spelling, married with another and for yet another to appear on his or her gravestone. Church officials or scribes spell the name as it was told to them, phonetically.

Available records indicate that this distinguished family name Fitch is descended originally from this Anglo/Saxon stock. The Saxons were a fair skinned people led by General/Commanders Hengist and Horsa, and settled in England from the Rhine Valley about the year 400 A.D. They settled firstly on the south east coast but by the 5th. century they had already begun probing north and westward, slowly advancing to the Welsh border, and during the next four hundred years forced the Ancient Britons back into Wales and Cornwall to the west, and as far north as Cumbria and Southern Scotland. The Angles, on the other hand, occupied the eastern coast, the south fork in Suffolk, the north fork in Norfolk. On the east coast the Angles frequently ravaged north as far as Northumbria and the Scottish border. Anglo/Saxon rule prevailed for five centuries and the nation divided into five separate kingdoms, a high king being elected as supreme ruler. Alfred the Great emerged in the 9th century as the Saxon leader to dispel the Danish invasion. This Viking intrusion, firstly successful, did more to unite England than any other factor. Finally, in 1066, the Danes were massacred and there are few remaining families of this extraction.

England, in 1066, under Harold, was enjoying reasonable stability. However, the Norman invasion from France and their victory at the Battle of Hastings, found many of the vanquished Saxon land owners to be forfeited their land by Duke William and his invading nobles. In 1070, Duke William devastated the north with an army of 40,000 men. Many Saxons and rebellious Norman landowners fled north over the border into Scotland.

As relative peace was restored to the land the family name Fitch emerged as a notable English family name in the county of Suffolk. The Fitch surname was adopted by the Saxon family from the Norman term "fiche" meaning "iron point". Before 1300 the name was found in England in the counties of Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Kent and Devon. In 1300 the Fitch name was found in the Scottish areas of Perth and Montrose. One branch acquired land in Inverness and the family lost their sailing vessel in a fight with the English in 1359. Richard Fichet was elected councillor of Aberdeen in 1398. Meanwhile, in England the family continued to flourish, particularly in the county of Essex where they held seats in Rudsell, Ramsden and Mount Rascal. Notable amongst the family at this time was Fitch of Suffolk.

Surviving the elements, the plagues and famines for the next two or three centuries the surname Fitch flourished and helped shape the culture of the nation. Later, during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, all Britain was ravaged by internal religious conflict. First, Protastantism, then the newly found political fervour of Cromwellianism, and the remnants of the Roman Church rejected all but their adherants, each doctrine fighting for supremacy. These were turbulent times. The conflicts between Church sects, the Crown and political groups all claimed their allegiances and imposed their influence on the population. Clans and families were deliberately broken and disbanded by reigning monarches to reduce particular, many families were freely 'encouraged' to migrate to Ireland. Some were rewarded with grants of lands at prices no one could refuse.

In Ireland, they became known as the 'Adventurers for land in Ireland'. Essentially, government sponsored Protestant settlers 'undertook' to keep their faith, being granted lands previously owned by the Catholic Irish for only nominal payment. In Ireland the family settled in county Down in the 17th century.

In the midst of this turmoil the New World beckoned the adventurous. They migrated, some voluntarily from Ireland, but mostly directly from England, their home territories. Some also moved to the European continent. Members of the family name Fitch sailed aboard the armada of small sailing ships known as the 'White Sails' which plied the stormy Atlantic. They were overcrowded ships, pestilence ridden, sometimes 30% to 40% of the passenger list never reaching their destination, dying from illness and the elements, many being buried at sea.

Amongst the pioneer settlers in North America which could be considered a kinsman of the surname Fitch, or a valiable spelling of that family name was Matthew Fitch settled in Virginia in 1606, fourteen years before the "Mayflower; Eneche Fitch purchased land in Virginia in 1624; James and Abigail Fitch landed in Boston in 1635; Thomas Fitch settled in Connecticut in 1630; Zachary Fitch settled in Massachusetts in 1630; William Fitchett settled in Philadelphia Pa. in 1856.

From the overcrowded settlements of the east coast ports many settlers locked westward, and joined the wagon trains to the pariries or to the west coast. During the American War of Independence, many crown loyalists made their way north to Canada, becoming known as the United Empire Loyalists. They were granted equivalent lands along the banks of the St. LawRiver and in the Niagara Peninsula. Contemporaries of this surname Fitch, include many distinguished contributors, Ernest Fitch, an M.P. from Lancashire and the former Lord commander of the Treasury; and Val Fitch, and American Physicist and educator.

During the course of our research we also determined the many Coat of Arms granted to different branches of the family name.

The most ancient grant of a Coat of Arms found was:

Three gold leopards facet on a green background.

The crest is:

A leopard's face with a sword in its mouth.

Back of page one and two, list a Bibilography of sources.
All of which are too long, and obscure to provide.

The above supplied by:
George Arthur Fitch
Elkhart, Indiana,
February 14, 1998
to typist, KK Fitch

Author/Publisher Unknown.

Family Group Record

FamilySearch® Ancestral File™ v4.19

Husband's Name

[Thomas FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDP-XS)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1472 Place: Brasonhead Castle, Brason, Essex
Died: 21 Apr 1514 Place: Widdington, Essex, England
Married: Abt 1490 Place: , Lindsell, Essex, England

Father: [John FITCH](#) (AFN:FHS9-67)

[Family](#)

Mother: [Juliana](#) (AFN:BZ6W-7V)

Wife's Name

[Agnes ALGER \(ALGOR, ALGORE\)](#) (AFN:2VDP-Z0)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1470 Place: Of Fitche Castle, Widdington, Essex, Eng
Died: Bef 25 1533 Dec Place: , Widdington, Essex, England
Married: Abt 1490 Place: , Lindsell, Essex, England

Father: [Robert ALGER \(ALGORE\)](#) (AFN:FN9W-Q8)

[Family](#)

Mother: [Margaret](#) (AFN:8JRF-TT)

Children

1. Sex Name

M [Thomas FITCHE](#) (AFN:FN9T-JX)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1490 Place: Brason Head, Essex, Eng
Died: Place: L., Brasonhead, Essex, Eng

2. Sex Name

F [Margaret FITCHE](#) (AFN:FN9T-MG)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1499 Place: Brason Head, Essex, Eng

3. Sex Name

F [Katherine FITCHE](#) (AFN:FN9T-NM)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1501/1502 Place: Brason Head, Essex, Eng

4. Sex Name

M [James FITCHE](#) (AFN:FN9T-PS)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1502 Place: Brason Head, Essex, Eng

5. Sex Name

F [Joan FITCHE](#) (AFN:FN9T-Q0)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1503/1504 Place: Brason Head, Essex, Eng

6. Sex Name

M [Robert FITCHE](#) (AFN:FN9T-R5)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1505/1506 Place: Brason Head, Essex, Eng

May have many errors

7. Sex Name

M [Robert FITCH](#) (AFN:JKT8-P1)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: < 1492 Place: <Little Canfield, Essex, Eng.>

8. Sex Name

M [William FITCH](#) (AFN:13LQ-NJV)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: < 1534 Place: <Canfield, Bocking, Essex, Eng>

9. Sex Name

M [Richard FITCH](#) (AFN:13LQ-NK3)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: < 1536 Place: <Canfield, Bocking, Essex, Eng>

10. Sex Name

M [Thomas FITCH](#) (AFN:13LQ-NL9)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: < 1538 Place: <Canfield, Bocking, Essex, Eng>

11. Sex Name

M [Roger FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDP-VG)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Est 1500 Place: Panfield, Bocking, Essex, Eng.

Christened: Place: England

Died: 12 Jan 1558 Place: Bocking, Essex, England

12. Sex Name

M [William FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDQ-BT)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1496 Place: Little Canfield, Essex, Eng.

Died: 26 Dec 1578 Place:

Buried: Place: C. Ltle Canfield

13. Sex Name

M [Richard FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDQ-C1)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1498 Place: Of, Brason Head, Essex, England

Christened: 28 Nov 1495 Place: Brason Head, Essex, Eng

Died: Place: L., Brasonhead, , Eng

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Family Group Record

FamilySearch® Ancestral File™ v4.19

Husband's Name

[Roger FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDP-VG)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Est 1500 **Place:** Panfield, Bocking, Essex, Eng.
Christened: **Place:** England
Died: 12 Jan 1558 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Married: 1539 **Place:** , Es, Eng

Father: [Thomas FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDP-XS)
Mother: [Agnes ALGER \(ALGOR, ALGORE\)](#) (AFN:2VDP-Z0)

[Family](#)

Wife's Name

[Margery HUMPHREY](#) (AFN:2VDP-WM)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1515 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Christened: **Place:** England
Died: Abt 1579 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Married: 1539 **Place:** , Es, Eng

Father: [MR HUMPHREY](#) (AFN:MWVJ-H0)
Mother: [Mrs. HUMPHREY](#) (AFN:22JW-Q30)

[Family](#)

Children

1. Sex Name

M [John FITCH](#) (AFN:FN9T-4V)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1534 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, Eng
Died: Aft 1558 **Place:** An Apprentice

2. Sex Name

M [Thomas FITCH](#) (AFN:FN9T-52)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Est 1536 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, Eng
Died: Aft 1558 **Place:** IN Father's Will

3. Sex Name

M [Robert FITCH](#) (AFN:FN9T-67)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1561 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Died: 19 Jan 1592 **Place:** Will Proved, L., Burnham
Buried: **Place:** Burnham, Essex, England

4. Sex Name

M [Bartholemew FITCH](#) (AFN:FN9T-7D)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1538 **Place:** Lindsell, Essex, England
Died: 3 Nov 1538 **Place:** Chelmsford, Middlesex, Massachusetts
Buried: 4 Nov 1598 **Place:** Chelmsford, , England

5. Sex Name

F [Miss FITCH](#) (AFN:FN9T-BW)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1546 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, Eng

6. Sex Name

M [William FITCH](#) (AFN:FN9T-FF)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1558 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, Eng
Died: 5 Dec 1588 **Place:** Chelmsford, Middlesex, Massachusetts
Buried: 5 Dec 1588 **Place:** Chelmsford, Essex, Eng

7. Sex Name

M [Clement FITCH](#) (AFN:JKT9-32)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1552 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Died: 22 May 1573 **Place:** Panfield, Essex, England
Buried: 22 May 1573 **Place:** Panfield, Essex, England

8. Sex Name

M [George FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDP-S4)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1556 **Place:** Of Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England
Died: 12 May 1605 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England

9. Sex Name

M [Richard FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDQ-04)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1549 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, Eng
Died: 13 Jun 1603 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Buried: 13 Jun 1603 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England

10. Sex Name

F [Margaret FITCH](#) (AFN:WBS3-XB)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1544 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, Eng.

11. Sex Name

F [Mary FITCH](#) (AFN:WBS4-0M)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1546 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, Eng

12. Sex Name

F [Joan FITCH](#) (AFN:P1NX-T1)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1563 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England

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Husband's Name

[George FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDP-S4)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1556 **Place:** Of Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England
Died: 12 May 1605 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Married: 13 Sep 1574 **Place:** Little Canfield, Essex, England

Father: [Roger FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDP-VG)

[Family](#)

Mother: [Margery HUMPHREY](#) (AFN:2VDP-WM)

Wife's Name

[Joan THURGOOD](#) (AFN:2VDP-T9)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1553 **Place:** Elsenham, Essex, England
Died: Est 1600 **Place:** Edwardstone, Essex, England
Married: 13 Sep 1574 **Place:** Little Canfield, Essex, England

Father:

Mother:

Children

1. Sex Name

M [Zachery FITCH](#) (AFN:FN9S-WP)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1577 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England
Died: Jan 1632 **Place:** Braintree/, Bocking, Essex, England

2. Sex Name

F [Miss FITCH](#) (AFN:FN9S-Z2)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt 1592 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England

3. Sex Name

M [George FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDQ-GJ)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1584 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England
Christened: 1605 **Place:** Of Great Dunmow, Essex, England
Died: 10 Nov 1614 **Place:** L., Great Dunmow, Es, Eng
Buried: **Place:** Great Dunmow, Essex, England

4. Sex Name

F [Frances FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDQ-K2)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1582 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England
Christened: 1605 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England

5. Sex Name

M [Arthur FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDQ-JV)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 7 Oct 1596 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England
Christened: 7 Oct 1596 **Place:** Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England

6. Sex Name**F** [FITCH](#) (AFN:2181-WV4)[Pedigree](#)**Born:** Abt 1592 **Place:** Braintree, Essex, England

7. Sex Name**M** [Thomas FITCH](#) (AFN:2VVK-LJ)[Pedigree](#)

Born:	1590	Place: Braintree/, Bocking, Essex, England
Christened:	1590	Place: , Bocking, Essex, England
Died:	Jan 1632/3	Place: , Bocking, Essex, England

8. Sex Name**M** [Joseph FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDQ-HP)[Pedigree](#)

Born:	1587	Place: Braintree, Bocking, Essex, England
Christened:	1587	Place: , Ess, Eng
Died:	1614	Place:

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Family Group Record

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Husband's Name

[Thomas FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDK-LJ)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1590 **Place:** Braintree/, Bocking, Essex, England
Christened: 1590 **Place:** , Bocking, Essex, England
Died: Jan 1632/3 **Place:** , Bocking, Essex, England
Married: 8 Aug 1611 **Place:** St Mary's, Bocking, Essex, England

Father: [George FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDP-S4)

[Family](#)

Mother: [Joan THURGOOD](#) (AFN:2VDP-T9)

Wife's Name

[Anna REEVE](#) (AFN:2VDK-MP)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 29 Nov 1590 **Place:** Garret Manor, Bocking, Essex, England
Christened: 29 Nov 1590 **Place:** Gosfield, Essex, England
Died: 20 Jan 1686 **Place:** Norwalk, Fairfield, Connecticut
Married: 8 Aug 1611 **Place:** St Mary's, Bocking, Essex, England

Father: [John REEVE](#) (AFN:FP4M-13)

[Family](#)

Mother: [Mary BROCK](#) (AFN:FP4M-28)

Children

1. Sex Name

U [Anne FITCH](#) (AFN:137V-671)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 6 Aug 1630 **Place:** England

2. Sex Name

U [Nathaniel FITCH](#) (AFN:137V-620)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 26 Dec 1623 **Place:** England
Died: 8 May 1649 **Place:** Brittlewell, Essex, England

3. Sex Name

F [Jeremy FITCH](#) (AFN:137V-636)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 5 Aug 1625 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England

4. Sex Name

U [Samuel FITCH](#) (AFN:137V-64D)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 26 Nov 1626 **Place:** England
Died: Aft 1650 **Place:**

5. Sex Name

F [Elizabeth FITCH](#) (AFN:FP4L-JJ)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1614 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Died: 11 Nov 1615 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Buried: 11 Nov 1615 **Place:** Brocking, , England

6. Sex NameM [Zachary FITCH](#) (AFN:FP4L-LV)[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1617 Place: Bocking, Essex, England

7. Sex NameM [Thomas FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDL-B9)[Pedigree](#)

Born:	14 Oct 1612	Place:	, Bocking, Essex, England
Christened:	14 Oct 1612	Place:	Bocking, Essex, England
Died:	14 Apr 1704	Place:	, Norwalk, Fairfield, Connecticut

8. Sex NameM [John FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDL-CG)[Pedigree](#)

Born:	16 Jul 1615	Place:	Bocking, Essex, England
Christened:	8 Apr 1621	Place:	St. Albans, Hertford, England
Died:	10 May 1676	Place:	Rehoboth, Bristol, Mass

9. Sex NameM [James Reverend FITCH I](#) (AFN:2VDL-DM)[Pedigree](#)

Born:	24 Dec 1622	Place:	Bocking, Essex, England
Died:	18 Nov 1702	Place:	Lebanon, New London, Connecticut
Buried:	1702	Place:	Lebanon, New London, Connecticut

10. Sex NameM [Nathaniel FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDL-FS)[Pedigree](#)

Born:	26 Dec 1623	Place:	Bocking, Essexshire, England
Died:	8 Mar 1649	Place:	L., Prittlewell, Es, Eng

11. Sex NameM [Jeremy FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDL-G0)[Pedigree](#)

Born:	5 Aug 1625	Place:	, Bocking, Essex, England
Died:	1649	Place:	, , Essex, England

12. Sex NameM [Samuel FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDL-H5)[Pedigree](#)

Born:	9 Nov 1626	Place:	Bocking, Essex, England
Died:	1658/1659	Place:	L., Hartford, CT

13. Sex NameM [Joseph FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDL-JB)[Pedigree](#)

Born:	24 Dec 1627	Place:	Bocking, Essex, England
Died:	26 Jun 1727	Place:	Windsor, Ct, New Eng

14. Sex NameF [Ann FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDL-KH)[Pedigree](#)

Born: 6 Aug 1630 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Died: Aft 1632 **Place:** , , Essex, England

15. Sex Name

F [Sarah FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDL-LN)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 24 Jul 1631 **Place:** Bocking, Essex, England
Christened: Abt 1635 **Place:**
Died: Jun 1719 **Place:** , Fairfield, Fairfield Co., Connecticut

16. Sex Name

F [Anna FITCH](#) (AFN:LWM3-JL)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: 1646 **Place:** Norwalk, Fairfield, Connecticut
Died: Aft 1696 **Place:** Farmington, Hartford, CT

17. Sex Name

F [Mary FITCH](#) (AFN:2VDK-J6)

[Pedigree](#)

Born: Mar 1629 **Place:** Bocking, , Essex, Eng
Died: 1693 **Place:**

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Date: Wednesday, June 24, 1998 2:59:49 PM
From: Fitch@ipfw.edu
Subj: Fitch Family - Update
To: cassellcw@aol.com

Dear Bill,
Under the Perry Fitch family line:

4 Brenten Dorn Fitch and Amanda Jane Wible Fitch have two daughters. Their names and birthdates are:

Natalie Jane Fitch March 22, 1995

Margaret Ann Fitch February 14, 1998

I enjoyed the article in the Newsletter "From Whom Are We Descended?" Just a few comments regarding the Fitch Castle article:

Brent Fitch, my son, visited the Fitch Castle about three or four years ago. He drove there from London, but he said there is a train that you can catch from London and it takes you to the station very close to, or across the street from the castle. He has pictures and brochures of the castle, and he said he would be happy to copy them for you if you are interested in having them. All that is left of the original castle is one stone, or a small pile. I believe a lot of the stones (rocks) were said to have been carried away to build other castles, or something like that. I can't remember what Brent said. Also, something that disappointed him a lot, is the fact that it is sort of what we might call a tourist trap. The pictures in the brochure show very primitive conditions which I'm sure are accurate for that time period in history. But they surprised me! In my mind I had pictured this glamorous, romantic castle in England.

Another interesting Fitch item. (I saw the picture but I can't remember the details.) One of Brent's friends went to Normandy and brought back a picture of a large rock or something similar with the name FITCH (or possibly one of

Date: Wednesday, June 24, 1998 2:32:18 PM
From: BDFitch
Subj: Fitch Castle
To: Cassellcw

I have visited the 'Mountfitchet Castle' in the UK avbout 10 years ago. It is located close to Stansted, Essex, which is about an hours drive north of London. The Stansted train station is, as I recall, a walkable distance, so that would be an easy alternative.

I located this site through the Fitch geneology book that my parents obtained in the early 70s at one of the famous Shoaff Park Fitch Family Reunions, which puts the site at Stansted. I can get the name of the genology book for you if you are not familiar with it.

I will fax to you the write-up in the brochure that I have, along with the map.

It is interesting that the brief in the brochure claims that Richard de Montfitchet died without male heirs. The 'castle' is actually a reconstructed 11th century Norman settlement. The rest of the printed history corresponds with the account in the geneology book I mentioned. Again, the 'castle' was destroyed in 1215, and may not be what anyone actually expects. There are a number of beautifully restored castles, check some guide books, I would recommend Warwick, close to Stratford-on-Avon, or Windsor.

You might also mention to European travellers that at Normandy, I am not sure which beach, ships from the Allied fleet are located on arrow-shaped stones which state the name of the ship, distance out to sea. The 'Fitch' is shown as one of the ships in the invading fleet.

the more ancient spellings) on it. I think it was a sign directing people to a ship or a town. You might want to ask Brent about that too if you are interested.

He said I could send you his email address which is:

BDFITCH@aol.com

My last name is still Fitch so I guess I can still correspond with you. I am the person who usually updated the information for our family anyway so this is the latest news for now.

Sincerely,

Sally S. Menzel Fitch (ex-wife of John E. Fitch)

----- Headers -----

Return-Path: <Fitch@ipfw.edu>

Received: from rly-za03.mx.aol.com (rly-za03.mail.aol.com [172.31.36.99]) by air-za04.mail.aol.com (v45.8) with SMTP; Wed, 24 Jun 1998 10:59:49 2000

Received: from smtplink.ipfw.edu (smtplink.ipfw.edu [149.164.187.109]) by rly-za03.mx.aol.com (8.8.8/8.8.5/AOL-4.0.0) with SMTP id KAA24974 for <cassellcw@aol.com>; Wed, 24 Jun 1998 10:59:49 -0400 (EDT)

Col. William Fitch and his Sisters Sarah and Ann Fitch

by John Singleton Copley



A portrait of Col. William Fitch (1757-abt. 1796), No. 422, and his sisters: Sarah (abt. 1763-1851), No. 425, and Anne (1758-1839), No. 423, painted by John Singleton Copley. William's father, Samuel, No. 119, was a Tory, and, in 1776, fled with his family to Nova Scotia and from there to London. William was appointed a Lieutenant Colonel in 1793 and was killed in Jamaica during the Maroon War in 1795. But, according to Franklin Kelly, Curator of American and British Paintings at the National Gallery, "The Copley painting was a memorial to Colonel Fitch. Although it shows him as if alive, saying goodbye to his sisters as he prepares to leave for battle, documentary evidence indicates that Copley was working on it in 1800-1801." He evidently based William's image on the pastel by Sir Thomas Lawrence, shown on page 86 of Vol. 1 of "Descendants of Reverend James Fitch." Sarah is dressed in white, perhaps to indicate her forthcoming marriage in 1801. Ann's black dress reminds the viewer that the siblings' parents had died within the year. Copley's painting was first exhibited at the Royal Academy in London in the spring of 1801.

Copley had left for London two years before the Fitches, in 1774. He said that he had

wearied of Boston, where the public was "entirely destitute of all just ideas of the arts," considering painting only a useful craft. After a tour of Italy, he settled in London, where he was probably commissioned to paint this group portrait.

There is some confusion as to who sponsored the painting. It was either Dr. James Lloyd, brother of William's mother, Betsie Lloyd, or Dr. Lloyd's son, also named James Lloyd. Dr. Lloyd had remained in Boston, where he was a prominent surgeon; his son was a U. S. Senator from Massachusetts.

John Singleton Copley

American, 1738-1815

Colonel William Fitch and His Sisters

Sarah and Ann Fitch

oil on canvas

101-1/2 X 134"

National Gallery of Art. Gift of Eleanor Lathrop, Gordon Abbott, and Katherine A. Batchelder

1960.4.1 (1550)

[Return to Fitch Memorabilia](#)

[Return to Home Page](#)



The butcher's shop in a high street that has shown little change over the centuries

SMARDEN

Kent

10 MILES (16 KM) WEST OF ASHFORD

In the summer of 1450, 66 weavers, fullers, drapers and tailors from Smarden joined hundreds of other men from Kent under the leadership of one Jack Cade and marched to London to protest at unreasonably high taxes and prices. After some fierce altercation, concessions were made and most of the men went home, but Cade was hunted down by the Government and killed.

An old Wealden wool village, Smarden has a particularly attractive high street, with white weatherboarded and half-timbered houses on either side. The Dragon House, next to the village pump, was built in 1331 for a family of Dutch weavers brought over by Edward III to weave broadcloth. Chessenden is a good Wealden hall house, built in 1462. Further evidence of the village's prosperity as a cloth town is to be found near the church in the two big half-timbered houses built by wealthy clothiers. The excellent cloth hall is dated to about 1420; the hoist that was used for lifting bales of cloth into the loft still hangs from the gable at the west end.

Next door, Matthew Hartnup's house has his name carved on it; it is probably older than the 1671 date shown. The church dates from the 14th century, with a 15th-century tower, and is built of local Bethersden marble. It is called the 'Barn of Kent' because of its surprising width and absence of aisles to support the 36ft (11m) span of its wooden roof, a rare occurrence in medieval churches. Another rarity is the oven for baking communion wafers, near the high altar. Smarden continued to thrive as a weaving town, with a weekly market, until the 19th century when hops were introduced to the area. Oast houses in the village date from this time.

SWAFFHAM PRIOR

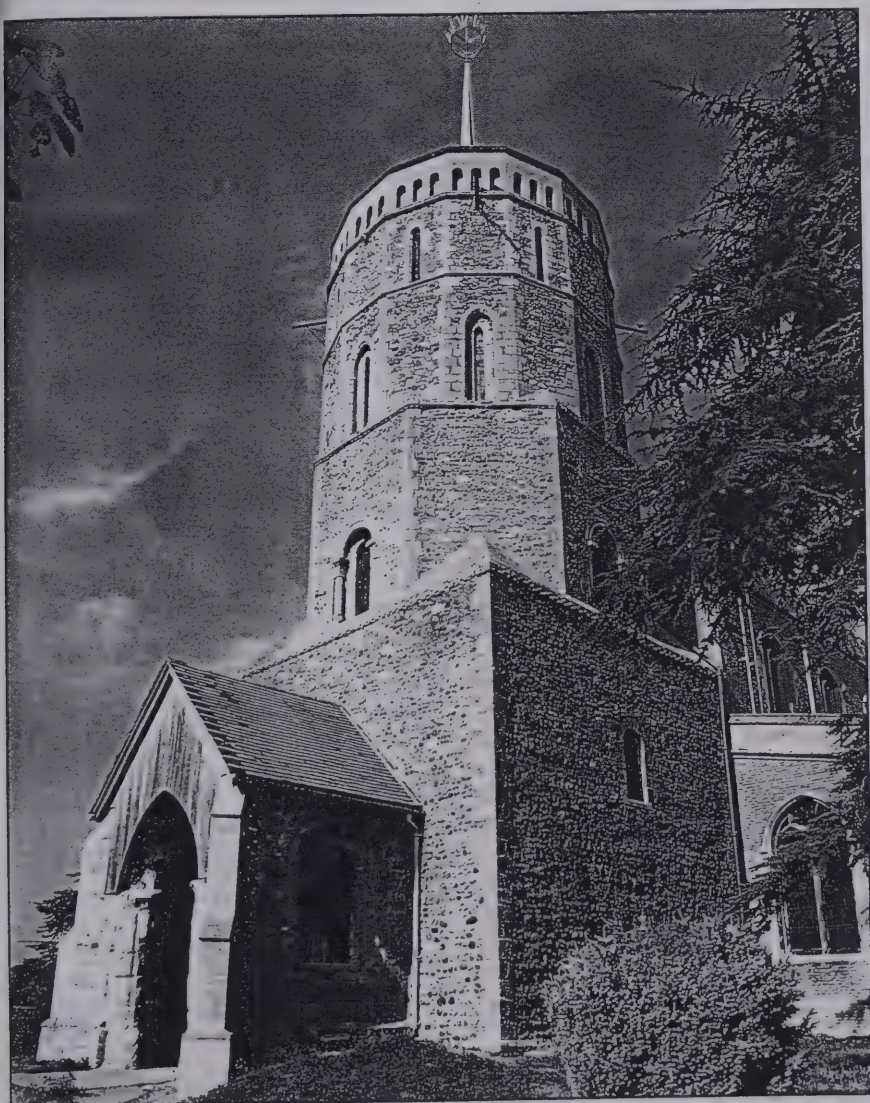
Cambridgeshire

5 MILES (8 KM) WEST OF NEWMARKET

Two churches sitting in tandem, diagonally placed in exact parallel across the square of one small churchyard: quite how this unusual phenomenon came about is a subject of speculation. Are they testimony to the rival endowments of two lords of the manor? Or, as some say, two embittered sisters? St Cyriac's dates from the 13th century but was rebuilt, except for the tower, early in the 19th century. It fell into decay but is now restored for use as a social centre, though for a time, when St Mary's spire was struck by lightning in 1767, this was in use and St Mary's was closed. St Mary's is more exciting, and particularly its

tower. At its base it is very square Norman, next is an octagonal stage, also Norman, and then it goes 16-sided; all very powerful. Inside is an arresting series of early 20th-century stained-glass scenes depicting a World War I trench, an ammunition factory, Wicken Fen, and a Swiss mountain. The village street below the churchyard consists mainly of neat cottages and Georgian houses. Swaffham Prior House is mid-18th-century, of yellowish brick, while Baldwin Manor, on the outskirts, is a very lovely Tudor half-timbered house. The village also boasts two recently restored windmills, one of which turns again.

St Mary's tower — a fibreglass spire replaces the original, which fell in the 18th century



The Devil's Dyke

Just to the north-east of the village the road comes to the Devil's Dyke, a colossal Romano-British or Anglo Saxon earthwork. The bank and the ditch are 40yds wide, from the top of the bank to the bottom of the ditch it is 60ft (18m), and the total length is 7 miles (11km). Walk along it (the Devil's Dyke Morris Men choose to dance the distance) and you will appreciate that that is a lot of earth to move with your pick-axe and shovel.



The old forge

CLAVERDON

Warwickshire

6 MILES (9.5 KM) WEST OF WARWICK

Claverdon, or Clover Down, is an ancient village set on a hill overlooking the Warwickshire countryside. With its ready access to the M40, its attractions are not lost on Birmingham commuters but it has retained a sense of community and there are several good old buildings. The church, of greyish stone, was built in the 15th century but partly reconstructed during the 19th century. Here is the tomb of Sir Thomas Spencer (*d.*1630), lord of the manor. His house was demolished some 30 years after his death, though the stone tower-house of the Hall is said to have been part of it. Also in the church is a

tablet commemorating Francis Galton, FRS (1822–1911), grandson of Erasmus Darwin and cousin of Charles. He studied heredity and it was he who established that fingerprints are permanent and unique. He was also the first to construct serious weather charts. There are a number of timber-framed buildings, some 16th-century, including Park Farm and its cottages. The mid-19th-century school buildings (now private housing), in contrast, have an Italianate air. The most unusual building in the village has to be the old forge, a half-timbered building with a uniquely fitting doorway.

LITTLE GADDESSEN

Hertfordshire

6 MILES (9.5 KM) NORTH-WEST OF HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

Little Gaddesden lies on the Berkshire/Buckinghamshire border, deep in the woodlands and commons of the Chiltern Hills and bordering on the vast parklands of Ashridge House. Ashridge was originally built as a College of Bonshommes by the Normans but was suppressed at the dissolution and subsequently sold. It remained in the possession of the Earls of Bridgewater until bought by the National Trust in 1947. In 1808 Ashridge was rebuilt by James and Jeffry Wyatt on a colossal scale, in sumptuous Gothic Revival style. Little Gaddesden dates mainly from the 16th century when the monastic buildings were turned into a large house at the centre of a huge

estate. A 'B' and a coronet can be seen on many of the houses, showing that they were estate workers' cottages. The village is basically one street, with houses and cottages straggling along one side only, set back from the road behind a broad stretch of grass. John O'Gaddesden's House, named after the 14th-century royal physician, is a delightful timber-framed, pargeated house of the 15th century. The stone-built manor house, dated 1576, has two turrets with stepped gables. The village church, interesting only for its monuments, is half a mile away from the houses. Its isolation, together with the existence of various humps and bumps near by, suggest a deserted village.

Timber-framed Manor Cottage



Memorial

The Ashridge Estate covers some 4000 acres (1620ha) of woodlands and commons and is open to the public. A focal point is the granite monument erected in the middle of the 19th century to the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater, the 'Canal Duke', who commissioned James Brindley to build England's first canal from his Worsley coal mines to Manchester. It opened in 1761.



The Moot Hall, once a meeting-place for Bunyan's followers

ELSTOW

Bedfordshire

JUST SOUTH OF BEDFORD

Pilgrim's Start

'As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place, where was a den.' With these words John Bunyan began *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The settings for the story of Christian's journey towards salvation are often clearly based on places he knew locally. The 'den' is thought to refer to Bedford gaol.

In 1660 Elstow's most famous son, John Bunyan, was taking part in the wrestling and dancing that took place on Sundays on the green, when he heard a voice from above asking 'Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven or have thy sins and go to Hell?'. Taking the first option, he became a Nonconformist preacher and thereby found himself in Bedford gaol. Here he stayed until 1672 and it was here, during another, shorter imprisonment, that he wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Both this and *Holy War* are illustrated in stained glass in the church. The Norman church, a wonderful, lofty building with high arches and a large

octagonal font where Bunyan and his daughters were baptised, is all that is left of a large nunnery. Once a year the nuns held a two-day fair, which gained a reputation for uproarious merry-making. Bunyan used it as the model for his 'Vanity Fair' and later Thackeray was to use it as the title of a novel. Attached to the church are the ruins of a 17th-century mansion. On the green the Moot Hall, a market hall dating from around 1500, houses a collection illustrating Bunyan's life and times. There are some fine black and white, timber-framed, overhung cottages, but Bunyan's humble tinker's home has long since gone.

